

Veritas

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Errata

In the article “Key West: Home of ARSOF Underwater Operations,” *Veritas* Vol. 2 No. 3, the photograph on page 4 was misidentified as soldiers of the 77th Special Forces Group. The photograph actually depicts members of the 10th Special Forces Group during training at Onslow Beach, North Carolina, and previously appeared in *Veritas* Vol. 2 No. 4.



In the article “Rangers in World War II: Part II, Sicily and Italy,” *Veritas* Vol. 2 No. 3, reference is made to the 7th Infantry Division. All mention of the 7th Infantry in the article refers to the 7th Infantry Regimental Combat Team serving with the 3rd Infantry Division. The 7th Infantry Division served in the Pacific Theater in World War II.



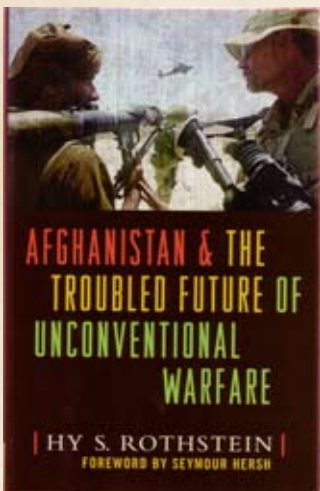
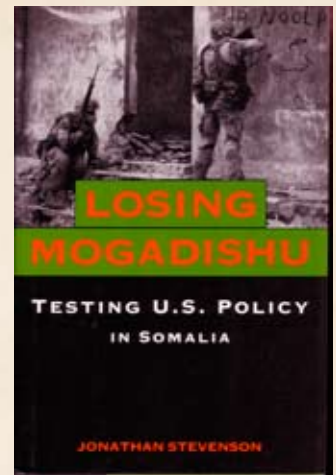
In This Issue:

In the past sixty years, ARSOF units and personnel have made history in diverse places throughout the world. Locations highlighted in this issue of *Veritas* are indicated on the map.

- ♣ *Vietnam*—Special Forces Team A-312 was instrumental in defusing the crisis caused by the revolt of the Montagnard people in 1964.
- ♣ *France*—Herbert Brucker and OSS Team HERMIT worked with the French Resistance in central France in World War II.
- ♣ *Afghanistan*—Logistics Task Force 530 supported Task Force Dagger during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in 2002.
- ♣ *Thailand*—OSS Detachment 404 operated against the Japanese in Indo-China from late 1944 until August 1945.
- ♣ *Somalia*—U.S. Army Special Operations Forces were the U.S. and UN “force of choice” in Somalia from 1992 to 1995.
- ♣ *Fort Bragg, NC*—Fort Bragg and Camp Mackall were the center of the Army’s airborne training in World War II. The 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion tested the concept of jumping from gliders at Camp Mackall in October 1943.

Jonathan Stevenson, *Losing Mogadishu. Testing U.S. Policy in Somalia* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1995)

The United States was involved in Somalia on an irregular basis from the late 1970s until 1993. *Losing Mogadishu* is one of the few books written after America's departure from Somalia that establishes a framework for how events unfolded. It begins with the Soviet Union seeking to gain influence in the Horn of Africa during the Cold War, progresses through the 1991–1992 Somali civil war, and documents the UN humanitarian relief efforts through May 1993. Stevenson presents the situation in Somalia as it evolved in an objective manner by analyzing successful as well as unsuccessful attempts by both the United States and the United Nations to alleviate the suffering in Somalia. The value of *Losing Mogadishu* is that it stimulates the reader to examine what occurred in Somalia from several different perspectives and formulate his own conclusions and opinions concerning the events there. Includes notes, bibliography and an index.



Hy S. Rothstein, *Afghanistan and the Troubled Future of Unconventional Warfare* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2006)

Former Special Forces officer Hy S. Rothstein uses the war in Afghanistan as a case study for what he views as the “conventionalization” of U.S. Army Special Forces. He makes the argument that the U.S. has been fighting an unconventional war in a conventional manner. Rothstein draws a distinction between special operations and unconventional warfare, and argues that Special Forces are being used in a conventional manner in Afghanistan. He concludes with recommendations to improve the capability of Special Forces to conduct unconventional warfare. Includes notes, a bibliography, photographs, and an index.

John W. Brunner, *OSS Weapons II* Second Edition (Williamstown, NJ: Phillips Publications, 2005)

With even more material in the second edition of his 1994 work, Brunner offers the most comprehensive scholarly work on the special weapons and equipment produced and used by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in WWII. He meticulously researched the OSS files in the National Archives to find original source documentation and has included these citations in the text. This is reinforced with numerous photographs depicting the items in various stages of development. Color photographs show some of these weapons and equipment in private collections. *OSS Weapons* is an indispensable reference work. Includes photos, footnotes, bibliography, and index.



Other Recommended Books on Topics Covered in this Issue:

- ♣ Dan Morgan, *The Left Corner of My Heart: The Saga of the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion* (Wauconda, WA: Alder Enterprises, 1984)

In the Next Issue of Veritas

The “Ganders” in the Korean War *by Robert W. Jones Jr.*

The 1st Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group was the primary strategic PSYWAR unit operating in the Far East in 1951. The “Ganders” (from “proper-gander”) were headquartered in Japan and deployed radio detachments to Korea. The initial stateside training and the unit’s movement to the Far East was covered in *Veritas* Vol. 3 No. 1.



San Miguel: The Battle for El Bosque *by Charles H. Briscoe*

The last Small Unit Tactical Training in El Salvador was conducted by a Mobile Training Team from the 3rd Battalion, 7th Special Forces Group. ODA-7 provided training to the Salvadoran 3rd Brigade at San Miguel from January to April 1984. On 25 March 1984, a 700-man guerrilla force attacked the 3rd Brigade base. The actions of the Special Forces soldiers of ODA-7 were a crucial part of the defense of the Salvadoran base.



The 151st Airborne Tank Company *by Troy J. Sacquety*

During World War II, Camp Mackall outside Fort Bragg, North Carolina was the Army center for airborne training and testing. One of the more novel, if short-lived, experiments was the 151st Airborne Tank Company. Seeking to find a way to reinforce airborne operations with armor, the 151st was organized to train and test the M-22 tank to support the parachute forces. Ultimately the Army abandoned the use of the airborne tank company which passed into the legacy of Camp Mackall.



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The "radio section" of Team HERMIT at a safehouse north of Vendôme, France. From left to right: Guy Sausereau (bodyguard), Second Lieutenant Herbert Brucker (radio operator), Guy Ferrand (assistant radio operator), and Edouard (chauffeur). Brucker, as member of the OSS, jumped into France in May 1944. He is wearing an American uniform, indicating that the photo was taken sometime after the Normandy landings on 6 June 1944. Brucker and Sausereau are armed with OSS-supplied Marlin submachineguns. The others in the photo belonged to the loosely organized, mostly Communist, French Resistance near Vendôme.



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CHB

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Major Herbert R. Brucker SF Pioneer

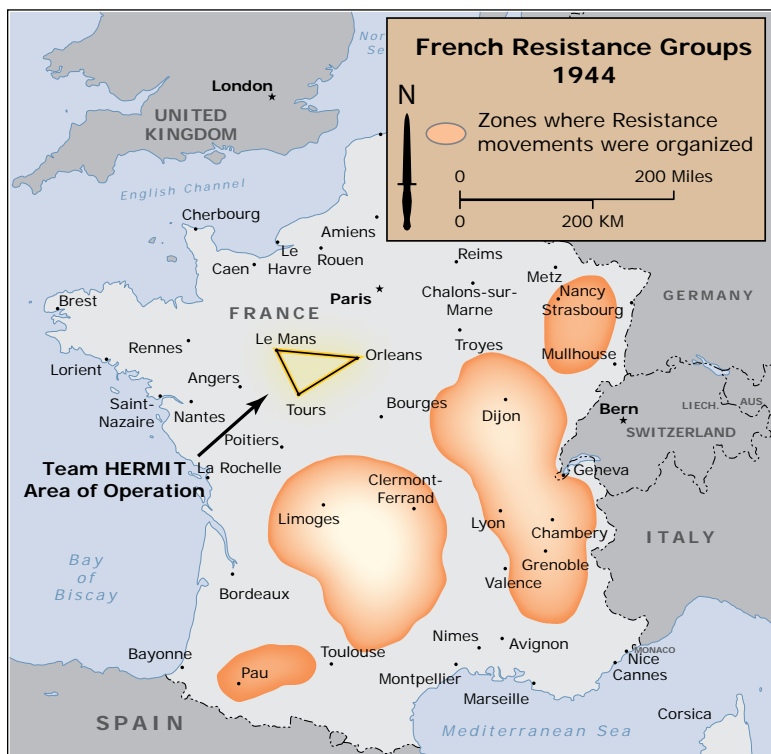
Part IV: SO Team HERMIT in France

by Charles H. Briscoe

To date, the pre-World War II OSS (Office of Strategic Services) and the British SOE (Special Operations Executive) training experiences of a Special Forces pioneer, Major Herbert R. Brucker, have been presented in *Veritas* (Vol. 2 No. 3 and Vol. 3 No. 1).¹ After his duty with SOE/OSS in France, Brucker volunteered for OSS Detachments 101 in Burma and 202 in China. He was a “plank holder” in the 10th Special Forces Group (SFG) with Colonel Aaron Bank (former OSS Jedburgh), served in the 77th SFG, taught clandestine operations in the SF Course, and went to Laos and Vietnam in the early 1960s.²

This article will feature SO (Special Operations) Team HERMIT operations in south-central France from May through September 1944, which supported the French Resistance conducting unconventional warfare missions north of the Loire River. During this assignment, Second Lieutenant Brucker, the radio telephone operator (RTO) for a three-man SO team, received the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary valor after being caught at a German roadblock. The purpose of this article is to explain what SO team members did operationally and reveal how complicated, demanding, and dangerous their assignments were before and after D-Day in France.

HERMIT was to replace the PROSPER team that had been “rolled up” when its female RTO, Noor Inayat Kahn (an Indian Hindu), codenamed “Madelaine,” was compromised and captured by the *Gestapo* in March 1944. Since Henri Fucs, a French-Jewish surgeon, had injured his leg in a bicycle accident in England, Team HERMIT was dispatched as a two-man element—2LT Brucker, codenamed “Sacha,” and his team leader, Roger B. Henquet, codenamed “Roland,” the former vice president of Schlumberger Oil in Texas. They jumped into St. Viatre, France, on 28 May 1944, accompanied by another operative, Second Lieutenant Emile Rene Counasse, the new RTO for Team VENTRILOQUIST.³ Unfortunately, all of the Team HERMIT equipment bundles and VENTRILOQUIST supplies were lost in the lakes surrounding the drop zone. Because that had never happened before, the airdropped bundles were not equipped with flotation



Note that Team HERMIT's area of operations—the Le Mans, Orleans, Tours “triangle”—is devoid of Resistance Groups and that activity tended to be more prevalent in Vichy Government regions and along mountainous borders.



SO Team HERMIT left to right: Second Lieutenant Herbert R. Brucker (RTO); Second Lieutenant Roger B. Henquet (Team Leader); Second Lieutenant Henri Fucs (Assistant Team Leader).

devices. "Antoine," the leader of SOE Team VENTRILOQUIST, was initially very hostile. But, when Henquet gave him his team's money and new operational instructions from London, "Antoine" became friendlier and agreed to give HERMIT a radio.⁴ That was the most critical item for an SO team.

Radio confirmation within twenty-four hours that Team HERMIT had arrived safely was important, but getting to a "safehouse" that first night was critical. However, once ensconced, the two HERMIT operatives got little sleep. "Combined with our high adrenalin and nervousness, there was a perpetual parade of local people wanting to meet and welcome the American 'liberators.' I was wondering, 'What the heck had I got myself into?' It was a circus. Talk about not feeling safe," said Brucker. "But, just after daybreak, Advent Sunday, 'Antoine' brought a Mark III radio and gave us the latest version of French ID documents. While he warned Lieutenant Henquet against the Communist FTP [*Franco-Tireurs et Partisans*] north of the Loire River, I set up my radio, dropping the antenna wire down the stairs. London 'came in' like it was next door. After reporting our safe arrival, I helped Counasse encode his message properly. Our next report to London would be to inform them that HERMIT was operational."⁶ Then, the pretense of security became ridiculous.

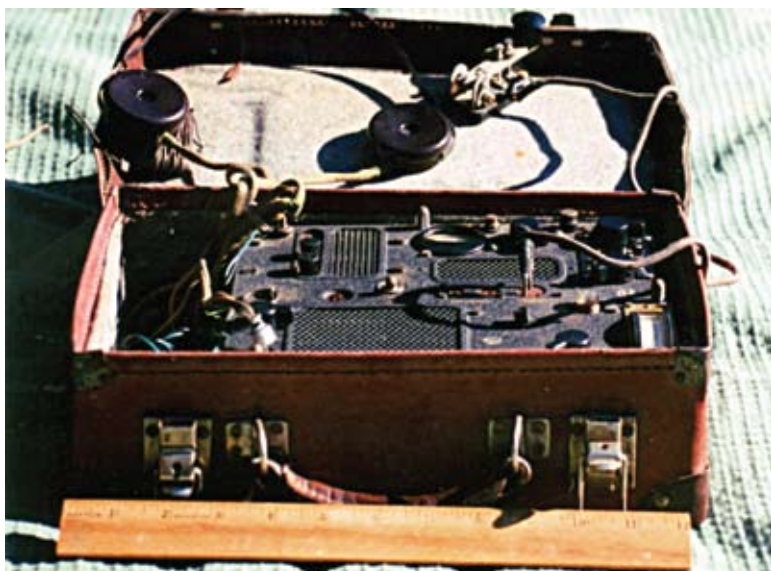
Advent Sunday and the clandestine arrival of two American liberators earlier were the "talk of the town." "It turned out that we were hiding in the mayor's house. Mrs. Soutif intended to make the most of the opportunity. Still in our three-piece suits, our hostess insisted that we enjoy the beautiful, sunny spring day with wine and a multi-course dinner set outside in their garden gazebo. As we nervously chit-chatted outside, groups of villagers strolled by on the way to, or coming from, church curiously peeking over the fence. The meal lasted forever. It

was an agent's worse nightmare. We had to get away and find some country clothes," recalled Brucker.⁷ At dusk, an escort from the local Resistance arrived.

Finding another safehouse was simpler than acquiring the peasant clothes required to help them blend into the agrarian environment—accessing the black market on Advent was risky. Only the local doctor wore a coat and tie. The average French peasant in the countryside typically owned two sets of denims (one being worn while the other was being washed and dried). His only suit and tie were worn Sundays and for funerals. Thus, a set of cheap denim work clothes (smock-like jacket and trousers) proved to be very costly for Brucker. "I didn't care what the denims cost. I wanted out of that hot 'monkey suit.' I wanted to become invisible by blending in," said the SO operative. "Thankfully, our new safehouse on the outskirts of another village was empty."⁸

"The place was straight out of a Hollywood horror movie. It had an iron gate whose rusty hinges squealed loudly in protest as we entered. The yard was overgrown. The owner, carrying a flashlight, unlocked the back door with a huge old-fashioned key. As he pulled the door open, a flock of bats came rushing out. That gave us a real start," related Brucker. "All the windows had been shuttered up. A half-inch of dust covered the cloths cloaking the furniture. After guiding us to the bedrooms upstairs, our host, promising to bring breakfast in the morning, left, locking the door behind him. I remember Henquet saying, 'All we need to make this a set for a horror movie is a graveyard outside.'"⁹

And that is what they discovered the next morning (29 May 1944, Day 2). Opening a window and pushing the shutter aside, 2LT Brucker saw Henquet's graveyard a short distance away. He then heard airplanes approaching at a low level from the rear of the house. "I stood there somewhat mesmerized as two German Messerschmitt ME-109s buzzed over the house. Fighters overhead were so common in England that I did not react until I noticed that those two planes had black crosses on their wings. They definitely weren't ours. It hit me that we were overseas on an operation, not back home," said Brucker. "Opening the window was not smart, especially when we noticed our footpaths through all that dust. We were screwing up like two amateurs and this was serious business."¹⁰ However, more surprises awaited Team



The SOE Type A Mark III suitcase radio (500-mile range) was the smallest available. It still weighed thirty-nine pounds. The small suitcase container was seriously unbalanced for hand-carrying because the heavy battery filled the left side of the container.⁵

⁴ Veritas



German Messerschmitt ME-109G fighter plane with belly tank to extend its operating range.



Gasoline shortages in Occupied France during WWII forced the French to be creative. This late 1930s French Renault sedan has a charcoal burner installed in the trunk.

HERMIT on the way to its assigned area of operations (AO) north of the Loire River.

After a meal of eggs, sausage, and bread, two French Resistance members with submachineguns (SMGs) arrived to take LTs Henquet and Brucker to their AO. They drove up in an early 1930s sedan. Since gasoline was not routinely available to French civilians, the car had been converted to operate

using a charcoal/wood chip boiler system—*gasozhen*. “Henquet and I clambered in the back with our weapons (pistols), briefcases, and the Mark III radio between us. [As noted earlier, all the bundles with the radios, SMGs, emergency rations, etc., had been lost in the lakes adjacent to the DZ.] The car’s trunk was filled with charcoal. Then, off we pattered at twenty miles per hour like we were going out for a Sunday drive. It was crazy, but we didn’t have much choice. The car was underpowered and slow, but it beat walking. Near Contres, about half-way (twenty-five kilometers from our destination), we had a flat tire, of course. Our two French escorts simply jacked up the car and proceeded to take the tire apart. I hid the radio in some bushes nearby. They had several spare inner tubes covered with patches; one did not

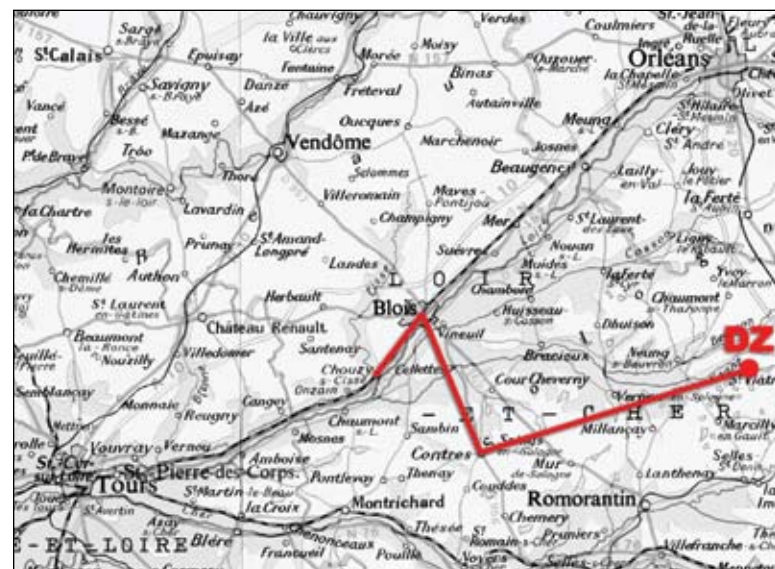
leak. Several horse-drawn wagons carrying German troops passed by while we ‘nonchalantly’ busied ourselves with the repair. That was my first glimpse of the ‘mighty *Wehrmacht*.’ The tire repair took an hour and a half. Anticipating a German checkpoint on the Loire River bridge at Blois, we made plans for a worst case scenario. But luck was with us. The enemy guard posts were unmanned. I’ll never forget that trip,” said Brucker. “I hid my radio in the Blois Forest before they delivered us to our Resistance contact at a third safehouse in Chouzy, six kilometers from Blois.”¹¹

The next challenge for Team HERMIT was transportation. Railways were out of the question for obvious reasons. Cars and trucks were not their transportation of choice. Bicycles were most commonly used by French working people. The two SO men had to blend into their agrarian environs. “A good agent must have good muscles, as our daily average bicycle mileage was between eighty and one hundred kilometers (fifty to sixty miles),” reported Henquet.¹² Again the dilemma was availability; there were none to be acquired on the local black market. The alternative was to steal some from a French collaborator with German and criminal connections. Arrangements were made with a local Resistance contact to effect a “midnight requisition” on Night 3 (29 May). Then, the three burglars waited an hour after the collaborator turned off his lights before they approached a storage shed. After breaking the lock and slipping inside, the trio found only two bicycles—a woman’s and a tandem model. Both were taken and the three thieves pedaled off in the night. That accomplished, Team HERMIT was ready for operations.¹³

The next day (Day 3, 30 May), Henquet was introduced to the nominal Resistance commander, Baron de Soubeyran; a retired French cavalry officer, Marcel Bozon, the Communist FTP chief for Loire et Cher department; and



The Loire River was a formidable obstacle that Team HERMIT had to cross at Blois to reach its area of operations.



The map depicts the first two-days movement of Team HERMIT from the St. Viatre drop zone to Chouzy, six kilometers from Blois.

Raymond Compain. "It was agreed that HERMIT would work exclusively north of the Loire River with the FTP. They would respond to military orders from HERMIT. The FTP, the fighting branch of the *Front National* (FN), was already organized in the region. Marcel would be the commander of his men and I would work with him acting as advisor and liaison with headquarters rather than as his superior. We would discuss problems of organization with him, but he would pass the orders to the field. He was to obey the orders from headquarters transmitted by me, but would furnish activity reports to his 'responsibles.' Baron de Soubeyran was to assist us in mapping guerrilla operations," said LT Henquet. "I decided . . . that we would not create our own resistance groups. Instead, we would use those already existing, helping in their organization, their armaments, their direction, and leaving their own entity in the political frame we found them."¹⁴ Marcel said that the Indre et Loire department was in bad shape. The *Gestapo* had been very successful when they "rolled up" team PROSPER. The FTP groups had been scattered, but though unarmed, they were well organized. Their numbers given as 1,000 were greatly exaggerated (reality was about 500).¹⁵

During these discussions, Brucker hired Raymond Compain to serve as his bodyguard and to shelter him in his home in Coulanges, a small hamlet nearby.¹⁶ That done, the two retrieved the Mark III radio from its hiding place in the Blois Forest so Brucker could transmit the Team HERMIT operational status message to London.¹⁷ Now, Henquet had to coordinate land use for a DZ so that they could be resupplied with arms, additional radios, batteries, and equipment. These were essentials that their money could not buy. Then, they would be truly operational. But, SO Team HERMIT had received too much exposure since its arrival.

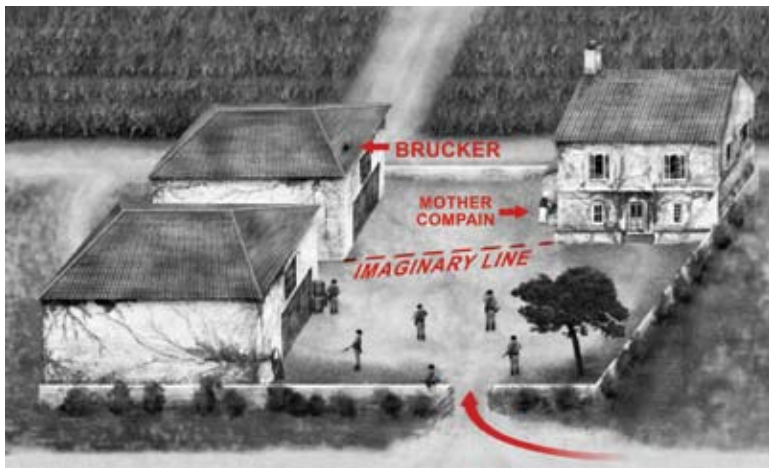
Raymond Compain (left) from Coulanges, France, served as Second Lieutenant Herbert R. Brucker's bodyguard for the duration of the Team HERMIT mission. Guy Ferrand, the "assistant RTO" is to the right.

Brucker's suspicions that the Germans were looking for them were confirmed on 31 May, four days after landing at St. Viatre. It was purely chance that he spotted a German Army truck parked just off the Blois Forest road at the Coulanges intersection. The driver, facing away, was smoking a cigarette while sitting on the running board. His comrade, standing in the truck bed, had a "huge pair of aircraft spotting binoculars trained on Raymond's house in Coulanges, obviously looking for us," said Brucker.¹⁸ As Brucker and Raymond slipped into the forest, they ran into Henquet, who, having spotted the truck, had come from his safehouse nearby to warn them. The three decided that they needed to relocate. Raymond suggested going to his family's wine aging cave. This turned out to be more like a bunker built into a cliff base nearby. But, it was in the woods and darkness had come. As Henquet and Raymond collected hay for bedding, Brucker used rags to cover up the barred window on the door. They got little sleep that night in the cool cave and awakened at daybreak quite hungry.¹⁹

In daylight (Day 5, 1 June), Henquet and Brucker scouted around their new hideout while Raymond, suffering from a toothache, went into the nearby village to buy food. The pair quickly discovered the trail of hay from the adjacent field leading directly to the cave and did what they could to remove the evidence. When Raymond returned with his cap full of eggs, Brucker proceeded to build a fire in an old fireplace at the rear of the cave to boil them. He was down on his knees in the darkness, totally engrossed in the task, when Henquet and Raymond started hollering to put out the fire. Either the damper was closed or the chimney was blocked. Smoke rising above Brucker's head was pouring out the door. "Talk about being clandestine," said the SO operative, "we were supposed to be expert agents . . . but it got worse," said Brucker.²⁰

"Acting like hobos, I was boiling the eggs on a campfire outside the cave when two kids (a ten-year-old girl with





Daniel Trites

French farmhouses (buildings) were usually clustered together inside an enclosure just high enough to keep the animals from escaping. Gates were conveniently positioned between barns for ready access to nearby pastures. These would accommodate farm hay wagons. Washing areas were located near outside privies to share the single water source. The HERMIT team's "limit of German advance" line is depicted with a dashed line. A concealed Brucker can be seen lifting a barn roof tile to monitor the Germans' movements in the yard.

her little brother) came down the path. Children pose the biggest threat to an agent. They innocently answer questions, especially when being interrogated. We had been schooled to eliminate them. But that little girl, having looked directly at me, had more sense than I did. She simply turned around and led her brother back down the path without saying a word. We were 'blown' but we were still hungry. As soon as we finished those eggs, the three of us hightailed it out of there. So much for being secret agents!"²¹

Raymond's mother's farmhouse was their next destination. After hiding in the Blois Forest during the day, the three bicycled to the farm at Chambon, arriving just



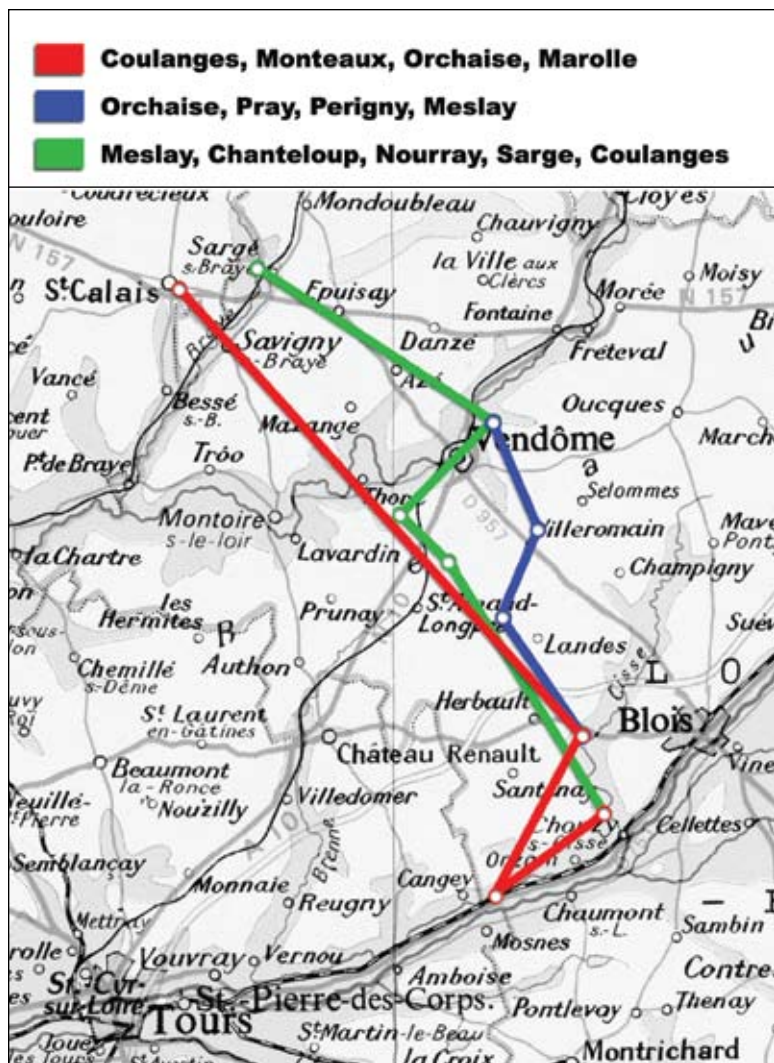
The 9mm Marlin UD-42 sub-machine gun had two 20-round clip magazines welded together in reverse for quick change-outs; the .32 cal Colt M1903 and .45 cal M1911 automatic pistols had seven and eight-round magazines respectively. LT Herbert R. Brucker habitually carried his firearms with a round chambered and full magazine to give him an extra bullet.²³

before daybreak. It was a long, harrowing trip using a series of bike paths to avoid German sentinels that had been posted every hundred meters along the surrounding roads. It turned out that Guy Ferrand, a gifted radio mechanic and friend of Raymond, was waiting for them at the farmhouse. After Mother Compain fed them, she told them to hide in the barns. They selected the barn nearest to the main gate, adjacent to the road. Henquet and Brucker bunked on one side of the hayloft while Raymond and Guy went to sleep on the other side. Just after dawn (Day 6, 2 June), Brucker was jolted awake by someone speaking German nearby. As he slipped into his shoes, he woke Henquet and alerted the two Frenchmen. Brucker peeked out the hayloft door and saw a six-man German patrol coming down the road. A sergeant was hailing Mother Compain who was washing dishes beside her house when the four "guerillas" managed to slip undetected into the other barn.²²

It was apparent that the Germans were conducting a house-by-house search in the area. Brucker lifted up some roof tiles to see what was happening in the yard while Henquet assessed their combined armament: as a minimum, Brucker always carried two guns—a .32 Colt automatic and a M1911 .45 automatic pistol with extra clips, but had scrounged a Marlin submachinegun with 100 rounds and a hand grenade; Henquet had his .32 and .45 pistols; Raymond and Guy had .45 automatic pistols. Mother Compain contributed by scowling at the German soldiers while they fired shots into her bushes and poked around the barnyard. The four fugitives had resolved to use all their "firepower" if the Germans crossed an imaginary line drawn in the middle of the yard. But the enemy soldiers, after a half-hearted cursory search, shrugged their shoulders and walked off. While the four "guerrillas" huddled in the barn waiting for the Germans to leave the area, Brucker passed around his silver-plated flask of rum. After a few shots of rum, everyone's confidence was restored. That evening, Mother Compain and Raymond's sister Suzanne brought them a basket of food. Since the farm had just been searched by the Germans, it was deemed safe to stay the night. Henquet left for his backup safehouse to maintain separation between team members. Constant movement and nightly stays at different safehouses throughout the area became routine.²⁴

It was just as well because the Germans returned the next day to check documents and ask questions. The "guerrillas" were long gone and the Mark III radio behind





Second Lieutenant Herbert Brucker positioned radios in circuits throughout the HERMIT area of operations. This map shows just three of the circuits established by Brucker—5 June, 17 June, and 26 June. Brucker chose his reception transmission sites randomly each day based on his London time schedule, but would change locations if there was a threat in the area. It was a constant scramble to avoid German and French Milice patrols, confuse the German radio direction-finding teams, and make his assigned communications window.²⁸

the front door went undetected. “You can do the dumbest things if luck is with you,” said Brucker recalling the experience.²⁵ Until Henquet could coordinate a drop zone for a resupply, Brucker kept moving about, shifting the Mark III hiding place back and forth from Mother Compain’s house to the Blois Forest between transmissions. It was risky because each day he had to recover the radio, listen for messages and transmit from the forest, and conceal it carefully afterward. That radio was a magnet for the Germans and a tether for Brucker until more radios could be dropped.²⁶ While Henquet was meeting with FTP commanders in the department, Brucker and Raymond bicycled around the AO, becoming familiar with bike trail networks and making arrangements to store the additional radios when they arrived from London. The two HERMIT operatives met surreptitiously or communicated using “dead drops” or “cut outs” daily to exchange guidance from London and messages for

transmission.²⁷

Because SO and SI teams were so small (three to four persons) and operating in the occupied countries of Europe before the Allied invasion on 6 June 1944, and RTOs were the critical link, London would provide as many radios as they requested. This enabled RTOs to conceal radios in a number of different places. That way, all Brucker had to protect were his assigned frequency crystals, one-time pad, and transmission/receive time schedule. Since his window to contact London was different each day, he planned to position radios in a large circle, operating much like a “circuit rider” to confuse the German radio direction-finding elements.

With radios scattered at random intervals (ten to twenty kilometers apart), Brucker and Raymond bicycled around the countryside (thirty to forty km) every day while avoiding German patrols and contact with the Occupation Milice (police) and making “comms” according to schedule (France was one time zone later than England).²⁹

“Since French patriotism after four years of German domination was pretty strained, those few willing to hide a radio for me were well-reimbursed. *Vive la franc!*” laughed Brucker. “The same applied to our bodyguards (*permanents* at 2–3,000 Francs, about \$400–600 per month). They had families to support. Henquet paid landowners for permission to use their fields as DZs, and vehicle owners to haul supplies delivered at night. That was to compensate them for any retaliation by the Germans.”³⁰ The reception teams “exploded” (*éclaté*) the airdropped goods to hiding places all over the place. By the end of its 107-day



Actual size of a frequency crystal for a Type A Mark III radio.



The French Milice were a German-sponsored paramilitary police force to supplement Vichy-controlled Gendarmes that maintained law and order in the countryside.



Vive la franc!

The Germans issued Occupation francs during WWII.

mission, Team HERMIT had expended 3,220,700 Francs in the accomplishment of its task; about 31,000 Francs per day or, based on the World War II equivalency, \$6,200 a day for “patriotic services” rendered.³¹

The first resupply airdrop directed by LT Henquet was effected the night of 4 June on DZs Aristotle and Catalina. “Team HERMIT used makeshift coordinates on Michelin Map #64 for France to identify DZs. Topo maps would have been a ‘dead giveaway.’ Civilians only used road maps,” said Brucker.³²

Two airplanes delivered supplies to HERMIT that evening. Just clearing a DZ before dawn was a major effort that required a lot of coordination, fifty loyal people, and transportation assets on each DZ to remove, distribute, and hide everything in several sites around the department. As was explained by Troy J. Sacquety in “Supplying the Resistance: OSS Logistics Support to Special Operations in Europe,” *Veritas* Vol 3. No. 1, this was a major logistical undertaking—hiding silk parachutes, containers, packing materials, and contents ranging from weapons and ammunition to generators, fuel, radios, and batteries to load-bearing equipment (LBE) and packs.³³

Thus, while Brucker was establishing his network of radio sites, Henquet was making arrangements for multiple DZs scattered throughout the department (Team

HERMIT alone received fifty-seven airdrops from 4 June–17 August 1944). All DZs were codenamed alphabetically by the SO team leader. No two teams used the same DZ name. For each DZ, Resistance “reception committees” had to be recruited, organized, and a signalman trained in each of the five regions established by HERMIT. Small, shortwave radios, nicknamed “Lucy’s” by the British, were distributed to the “reception team” leader to monitor the British Broadcasting Company (BBC). Each night at 8 P.M., the program aired in French included a series of “nonsensical” phrases—“Bo Peep’s sheep are all black,” “The monkeys are having a ball,” etc. When HERMIT DZ “reception committee” members heard their assigned phrase, it alerted them to expect an airdrop sometime that night. Drops were only scheduled on moonlit nights. Only Henquet and the signaler knew the code letter for the DZ. The signal man stood downfield from the drop zone marking lights and flashed the identification letter in Morse Code to approaching aircraft. The day after an airdrop, select members of the “reception committee” would survey the area checking for a German response. In between airdrops, Henquet worked with the FTP to distribute arms, ammunition, and supplies that had been cached all over the area; coordinate activities; meet Marcel and his subordinate commanders; and identify training requirements.³⁵ 2LT Henri Fucs, the third member of Team HERMIT, did not join LTs Henquet and Brucker until 10 June. By then, the Allied landings at Normandy had taken place.

The French Resistance elements had been primed for the upcoming Allied invasion of France. But they, like the Germans, did not know exactly where and when it would occur. As Team HERMIT listened to the BBC nightly broadcasts for the codewords associated with the invasion, so did the French Resistance. Premature open warfare by the Resistance and popular uprisings against the German occupation and its Vichy government would be disastrous. A series of different codewords after D-Day steadily upgraded and increased Resistance activities based on the progress of the Allied armies.³⁶ To further complicate matters on the ground, the SOE,



When trucks were not available to haul equipment and supplies from the drop zones, the farmers used horse-drawn wagons. They were slower, but the Germans rarely probed the heaping piles of manure used to hide the gear.



The SSR-5 “Lucy” short-wave radio receiver was small (5” by 8” by 4” thick). It had a single earpiece.

SUSSEX Teams

by Troy Sacquety

THE Allied personnel that Second Lieutenant Herbert Brucker heard being shot on 10 August 1944 were agents who belonged to three different OSS Secret Intelligence (SI) SUSSEX teams. SI teams were designed for the primary purpose of gathering and relaying human intelligence (HUMINT) back to Allied lines via radio, as opposed to Special Operations (SO) teams which were set up to perform acts of sabotage behind the lines. In October 1943, the SI branch engaged in a joint program called SUSSEX with the British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) and the French *Bureau Central de Renseignements et d'Action* (BCRA), an intelligence service set up by the Free French forces. This program would infiltrate two-man intelligence gathering teams, composed of personnel recruited from Free French forces in England and North Africa, into occupied-France.¹ Each team was composed of an “observer” and a radio operator, and was given a twelve to seventeen-week training program.² Those SUSSEX teams run by the OSS were known as OSSEX teams, and those by the British as BRISSEX teams. OSSEX teams were employed south of the Seine, while BRISSEX teams were north of the river. Twenty-nine OSSEX teams parachuted into France between 9 April and 31 August 1944, and they supplied valuable intelligence on German military movements and order of battle. In total, six OSSEX agents were lost.³

Teams COLERE, FILAN, PAPIER, and SALAUD (minus the radio operator of COLERE, who jumped in four days later), parachuted near Chateau L’Hermitage, thirty kilometer south of Le Mans, in the hours of darkness on the morning of 4 July 1944.⁴ The field into which they dropped was two miles away from their correct drop zone. Because of this, they did not meet their correct reception committee and those they did meet did not know what to do with them,

Pre-D-Day Alert and Action Messages Delivered in BBC Broadcasts

1–3 June	<i>Les sanglots longs des violins de l'automne</i>	D-Day will take place soon.
4 June	<i>Blessent mon Coeur d'une langueur monotone</i>	D-Day will take place within forty-eight hours.
5 June	<i>Il fait chaud à Suez</i>	General mobilization of all Resistance forces.
6 June	<i>La flèche ne perce pas</i>	Appeal call to all specialists.
7 June	<i>Les dés sont jetés</i>	General uprising throughout the country.
	<i>Plan Vert</i>	Sabotage all rail lines.
	<i>Plan Bleu</i>	Sabotage high tension electrical lines and power stations.
	<i>Plan Violet</i>	Sabotage German underground telephone lines.
	<i>Plan Tortue/ Bibendum</i>	Sabotage all road nets; Attack reserve Panzer units; Ambush all German troop movements towards Allied columns. ³⁴

OSS and FFI began inserting uniformed small Jedburgh teams and larger Operational Groups (OGs) by OSS into France after D-Day to supply and train the Resistance. Since SOE/OSS had compartmented all these activities, the SO and SI teams already on the ground did not know about each other and were not alerted that more Allied teams from London were coming to France. LTs Brucker and Henquet, unaware of these additional covert activities, did not realize that the number of radio transmissions had suddenly escalated. The Germans responded to the increased “terrorist” threat like bees storming out of an agitated hive.

To make matters worse, shortly after D-Day, a twenty-five man *Maquis* (Resistance fighting group) from Blois, armed and led by Hubert Jarry, “Priam,” began attacking local German and *Milice* targets during the day. Their identities were quickly exposed and the Germans began earnest pursuit. Thorough searches quickly reduced the group to “Priam” and five effectives who, after executing a *Gestapo* informant, scattered to hide in the Blois Forest.³⁷ Despite increased precautions because of the heightened German alert, Henquet and Brucker were almost killed during their third resupply airdrop on 10 June.

Both Henquet and Brucker were on DZ Bolivar, northwest of Seillac, awaiting an airdrop on 10 June. This was contrary to everything they had learned in SOE training. “We were young and felt invincible. We were living in an exciting atmosphere all the time. We couldn’t resist the temptation,” said the SO RTO.³⁸

The two HERMIT operatives learned that French “reception party” members regarded these “clandes-

ICI SONT MORTS
EN SERVICE COMMANDÉ. FUSILLÉS PAR LES ALLEMANDS
LE 10 AOUT 1944 A L'AUBE
LA S/LIEUTENANTE EVELYNE CLOPET
LES S/LIEUTENANTS :
ROGER FOSSET 24 ANS
ANDRÉ NOËL 25 ANS
ARISTIDE CROCO 26 ANS
MARCEL BISCAÏNO 23 ANS
PENSEZ A LEUR SACRIFICE

as they were only expecting to receive arms, not personnel. Although given a temporary safehouse by their reception committee, they never met their correct contacts. These contacts had established individual safehouses for the teams, but the OSSEX personnel had to fend for themselves and were not able to accomplish much in the way of their mission. Team PAPIER set out on its own initiative to the city of Rennes. Teams COLERE, FILAN, and SALAUD were given a captured German truck by the French Resistance. The teams loaded their radios and bicycles in the truck and set out for Paris in an attempt to remain in front of the rapidly advancing Allied forces, and accomplish their mission.⁵ On the road between Le Mans and Vendôme, their “luck” ran out.

They were stopped by German infantry who were intent on requisitioning the truck and bicycles. As the group was ordered to get out of the truck with their baggage, a suitcase fell open, revealing a radio. The Germans immediately ordered the group back into the vehicle, mounted it as guards, and drove off. At this point, Andre Rigot, the “observer” of Team FILAN, jumped off the moving truck. Although the Germans fired at him, he managed to escape. His comrades were not so lucky. Within hours, in a quarry two kilometers north of Vendôme, the Germans machine-gunned the remaining five. Aristide Croco and Marcel Biscaino of Team SALAUD, Roger Fosset and Evelyn Clopet of Team COLERE, and Andre Noel, the radio operator of team FILAN, gave their lives to liberate France. The sixth OSSEX casualty, Jacques Voyer, of Team VITRAIL, was arrested, interrogated, and shot on 27 June 1944. His purported last words were “You can say that I died like a Frenchman and a good Christian—Long live France.”⁶

1 David K.E. Bruce, “Recommendations for Combat Awards for OSSEX Agents,” report, 21 October 1944, Troy J. Sacquety’s personal files.

2 Kermit Roosevelt, ed., *The Overseas Targets: War Report of the OSS; Vol II*. (New York: Walker and Company, 1976), 208–209.

3 Justin O’Brien, letter to Lieutenant Colonel Lewis Gable, subject: “Summary of SI activities in the ETO which aided in the liberation of France,” 12 September 1945, Troy J. Sacquety’s personal files.

4 “Sussex Final Summaries,” copy, Troy J. Sacquety’s personal files.

5 “The Arrest and Execution of Teams Salaud and Colere and of the W/T Operator of Team Filan,” USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.

6 Roosevelt, *The Overseas Targets*, 211.



Artist rendition of a German twin-engine Ju-88 night fighter attacking the airdrop reception committee on DZ Bolivar, northwest of Seillac, France, on 10 June 1944.

Daniel Tolles

tine” moonlit airdrops as an opportunity for a social affair. After being alerted by their BBC message, “*Les sept veuves de Barbe Rousse*,” (“The seven widows of Barbarossa”) the “receptionists” brought blankets, bottles of wine, bread, cheese, and sausages to enjoy while they talked, ate, drank, and smoked during their wait for an airdrop scheduled between 1:30 and 3:30 A.M. Numerous aircraft were heard as the thirty-five men and women with a couple of trucks were enjoying their picnic in the warm, moonlit spring night. Fighters roamed the area while bombers passed overhead at high altitudes. Guy Ferrand had light-signaled at numerous planes without a response until at 3:15 A.M. an airplane started to circle the field, dropping its altitude. LT Henquet was running toward the DZ marking lights when the twin-engine German Junkers Ju-88 night fighter, coming from the wrong direction, opened fire. As tracers from the fighter’s two nose machineguns tore into the lights, everyone scattered for cover in the darkness. Bullets kicked up dirt all around. When the plane crossed the DZ marking lights, the belly gunner opened fire. Fer-



The Germans normally employed these radio direction-finding trailer vans in threes to triangulate radio transmission sites. Linked to these radio-tracking units were stand-by teams of Gestapo and SD (Sicherheitsdienst, or Security Service) agents and soldiers to trap unsuspecting RTOs.

rand, the signaler, was hit several times as bullets cut his boots, trousers, and coat in several places. Only his arm wound proved serious. Everyone was rounded up and sent home for fear that a German ground patrol would be quickly dispatched to investigate. The risk was actually minimal because coordination between German Air Force (*Luftwaffe*) and Army (*Wehrmacht*) was notoriously poor. However, German soldiers and French *Milice* combed the area the following day, made a few arrests in Seillac, and burned the barn of the DZ owner. The only good event that occurred that night was that LT Fucs, the Jewish surgeon and third member of the HERMIT team, had jumped safely into another location.³⁹

With the arrival of Fucs, Henquet divided his advisory duties and assigned Fucs to work in Area 3, Section B (Vendôme) with Robert Beauce while he continued working in Blois because Marcel Bozon was evading the Germans (a result of “Priam’s” premature actions). It was then possible to expand the effort to include the FFI (*Force Françaises de l’Interieur*) in the department. Fucs became the most involved in Resistance training and combat operations—effecting airdrops, destroying train rails, disrupting highway traffic, sabotage, dropping bridges, and eliminating the *Milice*.⁴⁰ Brucker was dealing with challenges of his own.

The HERMIT radioman was encountering more listening and transmitting interference. The Germans, who had moved three mobile radio direction-finding trucks into Vendôme, had begun jamming on multiple frequencies with broadcasts of old news, Morse Code, music, and ringing bells. Brucker persevered and his transmissions never weakened. “When their jamming failed to silence me, they came back a week later with three ultra modern units plus one aircraft. They really started bothering me when they switched on powerful Morse Code broadcasts after my transmissions to block my reception of instruc-

tions. Guy Ferrand helped switch frequencies faster and more often than they could monitor and respond. Their aircraft always arrived long after I had finished transmitting, but it was consistently on the correct azimuth. Sometimes, I would retaliate by jamming voice messages. It worked because they would start ‘bitching’ in German, which I understood,” laughed Brucker.⁴¹

His radio contacts were working very well until 23 July. Brucker and his bodyguard Raymond were headed south to support Henquet’s planned relocation. “Raymond and I had gotten very confident in our daily routine. The two of us were never stopped for papers. Hence, for this short stay, I was carrying a radio and my crystals. As we pedaled our tandem bicycle around an ‘S’ curve on the D-45 rural road between Coulanges and Onzain, we ran smack into the rear of a German element (near La Cabinette) that had just disembarked from two lorries—about thirty men. We simultaneously jammed on our brakes. The brakes screeched loudly and both cables snapped. Three of the soldiers, intent on setting up the roadblock, turned in surprise at the noise (bicyclists normally jingled their handlebar bell on road curves to alert pedestrians of their approach),” said Brucker. “Two soldiers bolt-actioned rounds into their Mausers and the corporal took out his pistol as he shouted, ‘Halt!’ and told us to come forward. We froze. He shouted again. We then started making gestures asking if they wanted us to turn around and leave. Judging us to be very stupid, scared, and not a threat, they approached us.”⁴²

By then, the rest of the German element had moved into the woods beyond the parked trucks to establish a bivouac. Brucker and Raymond had already dismounted their tandem bike and laid it alongside the road. “They asked for our papers. In keeping with our ‘two country dummies’ act, we nervously fumbled in our pockets for papers. As one soldier began to frisk Raymond, another moved behind me to check the sack (radio and crystals, Webley revolver, and two hand grenades under some food) on our bicycle. With his rifle lowered, the soldier patted Raymond’s pockets. I was gripping the .32 pistol in my jacket pocket, pretending to fumble for my papers. When the soldier discovered a hard lump on my partner’s chest, Raymond seized his rifle and grabbed the corporal’s pistol,” stated Brucker.⁴³ Luckily, the rest of the Germans were unaware that “the fight was on!”

Responding to his greatest threat, the armed soldier behind him, Brucker pulled out his .32 automatic, spun, assumed a two-handed instinctive firing stance, and fired two shots into the enemy’s chest, dropping him. “As the corporal’s pistol went off, wounding Raymond in the hand, I pivoted back around, shot the NCO twice in the chest, and then shifted my line of fire to shoot the other soldier in the



chest. It was simply, 'Pop-pop!, Pop-pop!, and Pop-pop!' as fast as I could turn, shift aim, and pull the trigger. As the third soldier went down, Raymond broke away running towards the adjacent field. The gunfire brought the rest of those Germans out of the woods on the run towards me. I emptied my magazine (two rounds) to scatter them and bolted after my bodyguard. That's when it really got funny," recalled Brucker.⁴⁴

"Raymond was already out of sight when I started running in the direction he had left. I hadn't gone three steps when my .45 pistol, 'dummy-corded' around my neck, slipped out of my waistband dropping down into my trouser leg. I was always lousy at tying knots. Have you ever tried running with a pistol banging against your knee every step and a noose choking you? There were bullets buzzing by and snapping all around me. It must have been comical to the Germans—watching me 'hip-hopping' across that field towards the one lone bush. As I dove behind the bush, I crashed into a crouching Raymond, knocking him over. He had lost his .45 in the scuffle. After we sorted ourselves out, I began fumbling to untie my 'dummy cord' noose. When I couldn't get it loose, I slammed another magazine into my .32 and pointed the gun at my neck. Raymond thought that I was going to kill myself as I shot the cord in half to release the pressure on my neck and get to my .45. He didn't wait to see if I'd succeeded. At the gunshot, he was already up and running towards a distant house. That's

"Two-Gun Pete" Brucker was so close behind Raymond Compain that he "could prod him in the butt with either gun." (Artist rendition.)



when 'Two-Gun Pete' jumped out and started chasing him with a gun in each hand. I remember seeing two children watching the scene from a second story window and a goat tied up at the corner of that house. Then, we were scrambling on all fours through the vineyard behind the house. I stayed so close to Raymond that I could prod him in the butt with either gun," chuckled Brucker with a grin. "After all, he was supposed to be my bodyguard, not vice versa."⁴⁵

The two "terrorists" escaped pursuit, "exchanged" their clothes for a handsome price, and walked to the town of Pray where they hid out until dark on 24 July. Raymond's identity was "blown" because the Germans had his papers. Worse still, the HERMIT RTO had lost his radio schedule and assigned frequency crystals, the critical radio element, but the two men were free.⁴⁶

Resourcefulness was the key to survival for a covert operative. When it came time to secure some transportation, this time the two fugitives stole two bicycles before leaving for Mother Compain's farm. They rode a long, circuitous route to avoid the German patrols that had saturated the area. The two reached the farmhouse by Chabon in the early morning darkness of 28 July to the great relief of Henquet, who had received word late on 24 July of the roadblock incident and that they were "on the run."⁴⁷ Alternate means of communication were needed.

Airdropped pigeons were used to carry messages to London during the time Team HERMIT was without a radio. Though Henquet wrote messages using his own code, they were signed "Robert (codename), HERMIT" and were addressed to "U.S. Marine Captain Grell, London," to insure proper identification. Henquet also sent two pigeons carrying messages on 10 June. HERMIT never received acknowledgement from London.⁴⁸

Brucker was embarrassed to have lost his crystals, including his emergency frequency. But, he had hidden two others at Moreau. Since the *Gestapo* had raided the area, it was uncertain whether the two were still available. Raymond went to investigate while Brucker tried to find another Allied radioman in the area. Contact was made with "Pierre," a Belgian RTO supporting an Allied escape and evasion network for downed airmen (probably an SI team). Using the Belgian's frequency, Brucker was able to reestablish contact with London. His CW (Morse Code) "fist" (keying style recorded before the mission) provided the necessary *bonafides*. By the time Raymond returned with Brucker's remaining two radio frequency crystals, the HERMIT radioman had already made three good transmissions and received instructions from London. "Those last two crystals provided excellent transmissions. You can believe that they never left my person until our mission ended on 11 September 1944," stated Brucker. "When London provided the punch line, 'Two bits!' to my signature message ending, 'Shave and a haircut,' I knew that the HERMIT mission was really over."⁴⁹

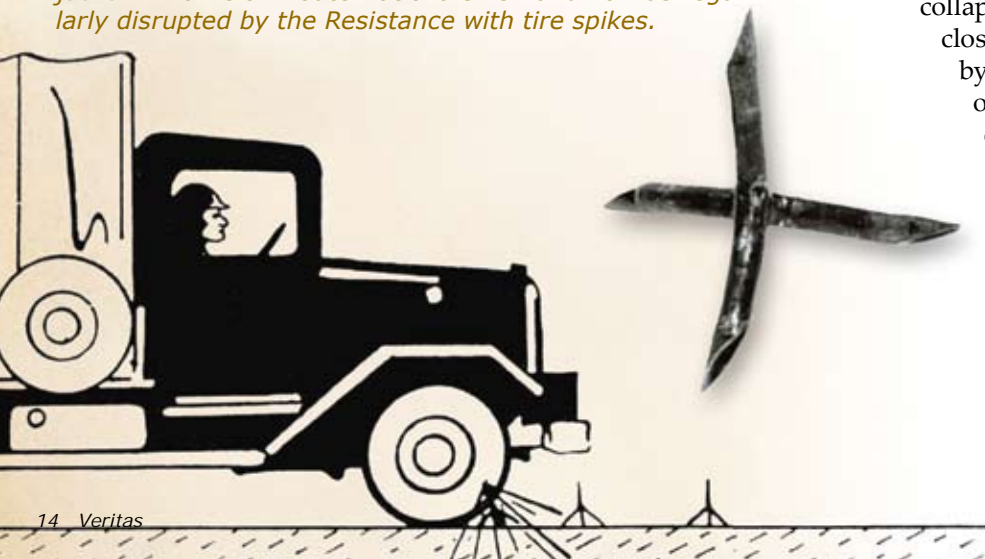
After the city of Vendôme was liberated on 11 August 1944, Team HERMIT was able to establish a "fixed" sta-

tion. Having captured a mobile radio direction-finding truck, Brucker and his radio team cannibalized the equipment to build a station at Poirier. He built in a capacity to immediately receive message traffic without breaking outgoing transmissions. A German gas-powered generator provided 250 volts AC. The station operated successfully until 30 August, Brucker's last contact day with London. Between radio transmissions and four pigeons, Team HERMIT sent almost eighty messages from 28 May to 29 August 1944. The use of "cut out" and "dead drop" communications were deemed unsatisfactory for prompt exchange of ideas with headquarters and the RTO. It was most efficient to have direct daily contact between Henquet and Brucker; "cut outs" served Henquet and Fucs when they were working too far apart for daily meetings.⁵⁰

Team HERMIT accomplished a great deal. LTs Henquet and Fucs organized, equipped, and controlled the operations of numerous Resistance groups on both sides of the Loire River. "Antoine," the SOE team VENTRILOQUIST chief responsible for the Loire Department south of the river, refused to arm the Communist FTP in his region. HERMIT simply arranged for seven airdrops on DZs close to south side of the Loire when "Antoine" was hiding from the FTP. On 8 August 1944, Henquet and Fucs participated in the liberation of 170 Resistance personnel from the Blois jail on 8 August.⁵¹ Telephone lines above and below the ground were constantly cut around Vendôme, Montoire, Herbault, and Blois.⁵²

The most amusing operations were those conducted for tobacco. The Resistance would coordinate its "attack" on a tobacco shop just after the highly rationed items were delivered. The owner was reimbursed in full plus the damages that had to be done to reflect an assault. After collecting his pay from Henquet, the owner would provide a glass of very good white wine to everyone before they collected their booty. Then, a few men would "shoot up" the establishment and everyone would disappear.⁵³ Several more after action observations by Team HERMIT's leader are worth sharing.

Sketch depicts employment of four-inch diameter caltrops against truck traffic. These caltrops looked like giant sharpened "jacks" used in the old child's game of "ball and jacks."⁵⁷ Traffic on Route Nationale 152 and 10 was regularly disrupted by the Resistance with tire spikes.



Since bridges were part of the German strategic defense, they were usually well defended and blown by their engineers after the armored units withdrew across them.

Henquet believed that security for a rendezvous was critical for organizing Resistance groups. Punctuality for meetings was impossible when one factored the distances to be ridden by bicycle for most rendezvous, especially when the Germans and *Milice* were active. The French had little sense of security consciousness. There was too much talking and too much curiosity. Team HERMIT's survivability was directly related to its constant movement and overnight stays in different places.⁵⁴ "It was a good thing that open warfare did not start much later than 11 August, as all three of us were too well known by too many people. Evidently we had to expose ourselves toward the end to crystallize all energies and our boldness grew, of course, with the success of our armies."⁵⁵ It helped HERMIT to have collaborators eliminated to prevent their exposure. Twenty to twenty-five collaborators ("indicators" as they were called by the French) were executed by the Loire Resistance as well as unknown numbers of *Milice*. The number of killed collaborators and *Milice* grew dramatically after they executed two downed American airmen.⁵⁶

The railways were disrupted by manually dismantling the rails from the ties. Two trains were derailed: one between St. Amand and Vendôme, the other at La Chapelle Vendomoise on the Vendôme and Blois section. The Plage River railway bridge at Marbous was collapsed and the Chateaudun-Bonneval rail line closed for good. Heavy demolitions were limited by how much explosive could be transported on bicycles. On 11 August, open warfare started simultaneously in four of HERMIT's five areas after Henquet verified the presence of American reconnaissance parties. It began in the region north of Route Nationale 776 (Chateaurenault, Blois) and west of road N. 10 (Chateaurenault-Bonneval). Action progressively extended south to the Loire River and east to the AO boundary until all Germans had retired or been captured. Vendôme and Chateaurenault were liber-

ated in early August; limited action prevented German reoccupation. Chateaudun was guarded to prevent the Germans from leaving. Only Route Nationale 827 (Chateaudun–Ogeres) remained under the control of German tank forces protecting this evacuation route.⁵⁸

Blois was evacuated by the Germans on 16 August after being attacked by a combined Resistance–U.S. Army 166th Combat Engineer Battalion the day before. With the exception of the towns Bonneval and Chateaudun and Route Nationale 827, the entire HERMIT territory was liberated by FFI forces alone. The American units were able to move through the northern sector without fighting. They never advanced through the southern sector which had also been liberated.⁵⁹

There were costs for these successes. HERMIT was responsible for arming 2,225 FTP and FFI (by the end of August 1944, most FTP were integrated into the FFI). These FFI forces suffered thirty killed in action and eighteen wounded and inflicted 122 killed, thirty-one wounded, and captured 263 prisoners of war.⁶⁰ Henquet organized a twenty-man assault group armed with Sten and Bren guns to act as a reaction force to reinforce Resistance elements in heavy contact. They only saw action on 11 August. As they withdrew, the Germans removed the burden from the Resistance to blow up the last three remaining Loire River bridges.⁶¹

The problem of what to do with the Resistance elements organized by the Allies became the responsibility of the Free French Government. Demobilization of the armed 2,200 FFI in late August 1944 was simply done. All men were officially registered as were weapon serial numbers. The FFI would be armed only when they were on guard or on highway patrol duty. These FFI would be kept in barracks, fed, and paid by the Free French commander at Orleans. Those not immediately necessary or having special reasons to return to civilian life (most were peasant farmers) were allowed to go home pending further orders from French authorities. Before departure, their weapons were collected and stored in the barracks. Sunday uniformed assemblies of FFI fighters included



The FFI in 1944. Raymond Compain is in the center without a helmet.

weapons marksmanship to maintain morale.⁶²

Per instructions of OSS Lieutenant Colonel Paul R. M. van der Stricht, SI France department chief, all available radio and S-phone equipment from the HERMIT circuit was to be left with OSS Major Gerald R. Davis at 79 Avenue des Champs Elysees in Paris. The Frenchmen, Raymond Compain and Guy Ferrand, were told to collect the two British S-phones (air–ground radio sets) and two radio sets still in the field south of the Loire. A British Eureka air–ground radio beacon set, recovered and used by LT Fucs, had already been turned over to elements of the U.S. Army passing through.⁶³ It was a cursory attempt for accountability because only the HERMIT RTO knew where he had stashed his radios, and even he did not know the exact place in houses and barns “rented” for storage. Some years after the war, Captain Herbert R. Brucker, assigned to U.S. Army Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) in Austria, returned to the HERMIT AO to see his old friend Raymond Compain. The two drove the radio circuits, stopping at the various hide sites. When they were done, Brucker had collected two of his suitcase radios—none the worse for wear—as permanent souvenirs of those wild days in France.⁶⁴

However, LT Herbert R. Brucker’s adventures with the OSS in World War II did not end in France. He declined further OSS operations in Europe, specifically IRON CROSS being trained by Captain Aaron Bank, because that force was filled with German Communists. Brucker did agree to serve again as an operative in the China-Burma-India (CBI) theater.⁶⁵ After being debriefed in London, Brucker bade farewell to Roger Henquet and Henri Fucs of HERMIT, and boarded an airplane for Washington. Before going on a short leave, the young lieutenant was presented the Distinguished Service Cross that had been awarded (via telegram) for his extraordinary val-

British PPN1A Eureka air–ground radio beacon.



British S-phone air–ground radio.



or on 23 July 1944, near Coulanges, France. In that action, “. . . he displayed great coolness and courage in killing two of the enemy and making his escape without loss of equipment.”⁶⁶ LT Brucker then attended an OSS survival course on Catalina Island, California, before assignment to OSS Detachments 101 in Burma and 202 in China. That overseas service will be the topic of a forthcoming article on this Special Forces pioneer. ♣

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Endnotes

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- 2 Charles H. Briscoe, “Major (R) Herbert R. Brucker, DSC: Special Forces Pioneer: SOE France, OSS Burma and China, 10th SFG, SF Instructor, 77th SFG, Laos, and Vietnam,” *Veritas* Vol. 2, No. 2, 33–35.
- 3 Major (Retired) Herbert R. Brucker, interview by Dr. Charles H. Briscoe, 14 November 2005, Fayetteville, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Brucker interview, 27 March 2006.
- 4 Brucker interviews, 27 March 2006, 24 April 2006, 2 May 2006, and 15 February 2007; *History of the London Office of the OSS. F-Section. HERMIT 216: Activity Report of 2nd Lieutenant Roger B. Henquet, AUS (Robert)*, 104, hereafter cited as *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report.
- 5 K. Keith Melton, *OSS Special Weapons & Equipment: Spy Devices of WWII* (New York: Sterling Publishing Co., 1992), 38.
- 6 Brucker interviews, 2 May 2006, 9 May 2006, and 2 March 2007.
- 7 Brucker interviews, 2 May 2006 and 15 February 2007.
- 8 Brucker interviews, 9 May 2006, 23 May 2006, 30 May 2006, 15 February 2007, and 26 February 2007.
- 9 Brucker interview, 9 May 2006.
- 10 Brucker interviews, 9 May 2006 and 2 March 2007.
- 11 Brucker interviews, 2 May 2006, 9 May 2006, 15 February 2007, and 26 February 2007.
- 12 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 113.
- 13 Brucker interview, 9 May 2006.
- 14 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 105; Brucker interview, 9 May 2006.
- 15 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 105, 131.
- 16 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 134; Brucker interview, 9 May 2006.
- 17 Brucker interview, 15 March 2007.
- 18 Brucker interview, 12 March 2007.
- 19 Brucker interviews, 23 May 2006 and 12 March 2007.
- 20 Brucker interviews, 23 May 2006 and 12 March 2007.
- 21 Brucker interviews, 23 May 2006 and 12 March 2007.
- 22 Brucker interviews, 9 May 2006 and 12 March 2007.
- 23 Brucker interview, 9 May 2006; Melton, *OSS Special Weapons & Equipment*, 40; John W. Brunner, *OSS Weapons II* (Williamstown, NJ: Phillips Publications, 2005), 60.
- 24 Brucker interviews 9 May 2006, 16 May 2006, 23 May 2006, and 12 March 2007; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 135–36.
- 25 Brucker interview, 9 May 2006.
- 26 Brucker interviews, 9 May 2007 and 15 March 2007.
- 27 Brucker interview, 9 May 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 111–12.
- 28 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 111–12; Brucker interview, 16 May 2006.
- 29 Lieutenant Herbert R. Brucker actually established three different circuits in those early days: first, Coulanges, Montaux, Orchaie, and Marolle on 5 June; second, Orchaie, Pray, Perigny, and Meslay on 17 June; third, Meslay, Chanteloup, Nourray, Sarge, and Coulanges on 26 June. The constant threat of compromise, operational activities in the area, and some paranoia prompted Brucker to randomly change radio hideouts and circuits. *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 135–36; Brucker interviews, 16 May 2006 and 26 September 2006.
- 30 Brucker interviews, 9 May 2006 and 7 June 2006. Roger B. Henquet reported that, “two percent of the people, at the most, were willing to risk their lives to liberate France . . . if paid. Eight percent were willing to take minor chances to help the Resistance if compensated. Eighty percent disliked the Germans, but were too scared to do anything about it. Ten percent were working for the Germans.” The French in HERMIT’s area of operations were mostly peasants who were making a lot of money under German occupation. They were well fed and suffered little from the enemy. *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 114.
- 31 Brucker interviews, 23 May 2006 and 30 May 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 114, 115.
- 32 Brucker interviews, 9 May 2006 and 7 September 2006.
- 33 Troy J. Sacquety, “Supplying the Resistance: OSS Logistics Support to Special Operations in Europe,” *Veritas* Vol. 3 No. 1, 37–47.
- 34 Brucker interviews, 16 May 2006 and 23 May 2006; Herbert R. Brucker, copy of personal notes, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 35 Brucker interviews, 9 May 2006, 30 May 2006, and 12 March 2007.
- 36 Brucker interview, 23 May 2006; Brucker, personal notes.
- 37 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 106.
- 38 Brucker interview, 23 May 2006.
- 39 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 110–11; Brucker interviews, 16 May 2006, 23 May 2006, and 7 September 2006; Brucker, personal notes.
- 40 Brucker interview, 16 May 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 106–109.
- 41 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 136–37; Brucker interview, 16 May 2006.
- 42 Brucker interviews, 16 May 2006 and 23 May 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 116, 137.
- 43 Brucker interview, 16 May 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report 137–38.
- 44 Brucker interview, 23 May 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 138.
- 45 Brucker interview, 23 May 2006.
- 46 Brucker interview, 23 May 2006 and 15 March 2007; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 138.
- 47 Brucker interview, 23 May 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 138.
- 48 Brucker interview, 19 September 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 111.
- 49 Brucker interviews, 23 May 2006 and 30 May 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 138.
- 50 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 111, 112, 138.
- 51 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 112, 130.
- 52 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 125.
- 53 Brucker interview, 23 May 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 115.
- 54 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 112, 113, 116, 117.
- 55 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 114.
- 56 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 116.
- 57 Brucker interview, 16 May 2006; Melton, *OSS Special Weapons & Equipment*, 88.
- 58 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 117, 126.
- 59 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 117, 126.
- 60 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report 118–19.
- 61 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 119, 122–23.
- 62 *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 131–32.
- 63 Brucker interview, 30 May 2006; *War Diary*, SO Team HERMIT Report, 124.
- 64 Brucker interview, 24 April 2006.
- 65 Brucker interview, 17 April 2006.
- 66 U.S. Army. General Order 32, Headquarters, European Theater of Operations, 11 March 1945, awarded the Distinguished Service Cross to Second Lieutenant Herbert Brucker (then Technician Third Grade) (Army Serial No 02045272), Army of the United States.

If you liked Beirut, you'll love Mogadishu*

*Smith Hempstone, U.S. Ambassador to Kenya

An Introduction to ARSOF in Somalia

by Eugene G. Piasecki

FOR the U.S. Army, Somalia provided several unique challenges. Not since the Korean War had the American Army supported a large-scale United Nations effort. It was the first experience with Military Operations Other Than War, and the first time American troops had been deployed to a country without a functioning central government since the end of the war in Vietnam. The primary purpose of this article is to give a brief introduction to Somalia, its society, and a snapshot of the Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) role there from 1992

until 1995. It will announce a forthcoming book that will explain in detail how and why ARSOF became the U.S. Army's "force of choice." It will also put the role of Task Force (TF) Ranger in proper perspective.

To understand the country, the first step is to identify Somalia. It is the easternmost country of Africa and consists of 246,000 square miles of land located in the "Horn of Africa." Somalia borders Djibouti in the north, Ethiopia in the west, and Kenya in the southwest. Of all African countries, Somalia, with the Indian Ocean on the East and the Gulf of Aden to the North, has the longest coastline. Proximity to the equator and the absence of mountains explains why it is hot and arid year-round with the average temperature ranging between 85 and 100 degrees Fahrenheit. With an agrarian-based economy that produces agricultural and livestock products for internal sustenance and export, the climate is important. Water availability is critical to the economy. Somalia's only two rivers—the Juba and the Shebelle—are in the southern half of the country (see map to the left). These rivers are the major sources of water for agricultural crop production in the south. The agrarian livestock herders in the



Somalia terrain west of Oddur.



Somali city water delivery vehicle.



Italian arch from Somalia's colonial period.



Somali village well and pump.

rest of the country rely on wells for water. Indiscriminate and unregulated dumping of toxic waste, improper human waste disposal, and constant blowing dust have contaminated most ground-water sources. To survive, the Somalis have resorted to drinking this water and, consequently, are plagued with Hepatitis A, Typhoid Fever and Hepatitis E, all infectious water-borne diseases. Major countrywide droughts occur every two to five years and threaten human and animal survival. Unfortunately, regional warlords controlled the water and other scarce resources, thereby maintaining power.

Somalia's population

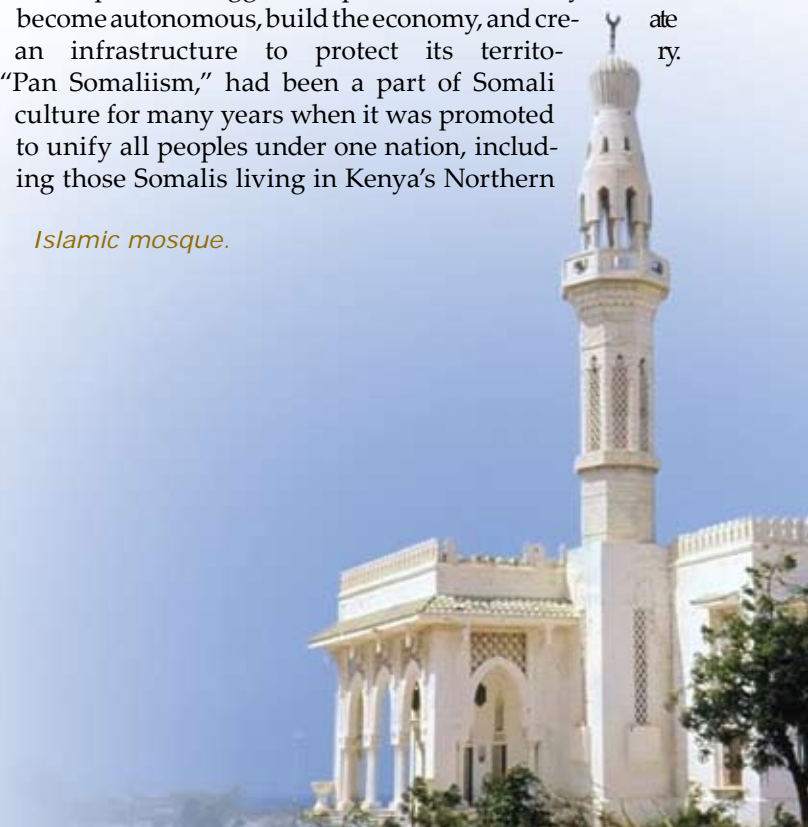
in 1992 was estimated at 6.5 million people. The vast majority of people have descended from the Eastern Hamitic people of the Samaal ethnic group. Somalis have a common race, religion, language, dress, and culture, and share historical traditions. Nearly all are Muslims who trace their ancestry to Abu Talib, an uncle of the prophet Mohammed who established the Sunni Sect of Shafi'i. Somali society is dominated by five clan families: Darood, Hawiye, Issaq, Dir, and Digil-Mirifleh.¹ These clans provide societal structure and family connectivity, but contribute to national fragmentation. Somalis will not voluntarily separate themselves from family, lineage, or clan affiliation, so there is little hope for a unified country.²

Western European colonial rule from the 1880s through 1960 contributed to Somali disunity. Somalia was divided and ruled by Great Britain, France, Italy, Ethiopia, and Kenya until 1949, when the United Nations made it a trusteeship under Italian direction. On 1 July 1960, Italy granted independence and the Somali Republic was formed. The republic struggled to promote democracy, become autonomous, build the economy, and create an infrastructure to protect its territory. "Pan Somaliism," had been a part of Somali culture for many years when it was promoted to unify all peoples under one nation, including those Somalis living in Kenya's Northern



Somali village water tank.

Islamic mosque.





Major General Mohammed Siad Barre

Frontier District, the Ogaden Plateau in Ethiopia, and Djibouti. The Soviet Union, eager to expand its influence in the region, supported Pan Somaliism and provided the Somalis military weapons, equipment, and training for its national security.

The futile efforts to establish a democratic national government ended when Major General Siad Barre, head of the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) and

Commander of the Somali Armed Forces, seized power by a coup d'état on 21 October 1969. Barre dissolved the National Assembly, suspended the democratic constitution, and established "scientific socialism" as the basis for government. MG Barre nationalized foreign businesses, outlawed all clan affiliations, and eliminated all political organizations except the SRC. These actions prompted the Soviets to increase their aid to Somalia. A twenty-year treaty of friendship and cooperation between Russia and Somalia was signed in 1974. Somalia became the most important Russian satellite in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In May 1977, the United States offered aid on the condition that Barre terminate his relationship with the Soviets.³ This offer was an initiative of President Jimmy Carter.⁴ General Barre took advantage of the offer by sending Somali army troops to assist the Western Somali Liberation Front forces fighting the Ethiopian Army in the Ogaden Plateau region. That prompted the United States, Great Britain, and France to abandon plans to supply arms to Somalia. Saudi Arabia and Iran agreed not to transfer U.S. arms and ammunition to Somalia.⁵ Incredibly, in July 1977, the Soviets committed a grievous

error that jeopardized their domination of the Horn of Africa; they switched sides in the midst of the Somali-Ethiopian conflict. The Soviets airlifted 25,000 Cuban troops and considerable Eastern Bloc military vehicles and equipment into Ethiopia to restore the border. Barre tore up the twenty-year friendship and cooperation treaty and expelled Soviet advisors, technicians, and diplomats. A major Ethiopian victory

in March 1978 ended the fighting. However, Somali refugees fleeing the war-torn areas became the next issue. By 1980, an estimated one million refugees had relocated to Somalia. Several world agencies provided \$132 million in non-military refugee aid to relief organizations such as the International Red Cross (IRC), the Red Crescent (the Muslim counterpart of the IRC), and Doctors Without Borders to reduce suffering in the southern border refugee camps.⁶

International relief work was in progress when two major events forced the U.S. government to focus attention on the region. First, Americans in the U.S. Embassy in Tehran were taken hostage in November 1979, and one month later, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. Somalia was once more of interest to the United States. On 22 August 1980, a mutual support agreement was signed. In return for a \$40 million security assistance package, the United States gained access to the Somali ports of Mogadishu and Berbera. U.S. military defensive weapons and training and economic aid continued until 1988 and 1989, respectively. Human rights violations associated with Barre's attacks on Somali National Movement elements in Northern Somalia in 1988 cancelled U.S. aid. Without outside support, Somalia became a country split among heavily-armed clan chieftains. The rise of General Mohammed Farah Aided of the Hawiye clan weakened Barre's grip on Somalia. Aided's militia drove Barre and his army out of Mogadishu and into exile in Kenya in January 1991. With Barre gone, Aided and businessman Ali Mahdi Mohammed of the Abgal clan fought for the presidency.

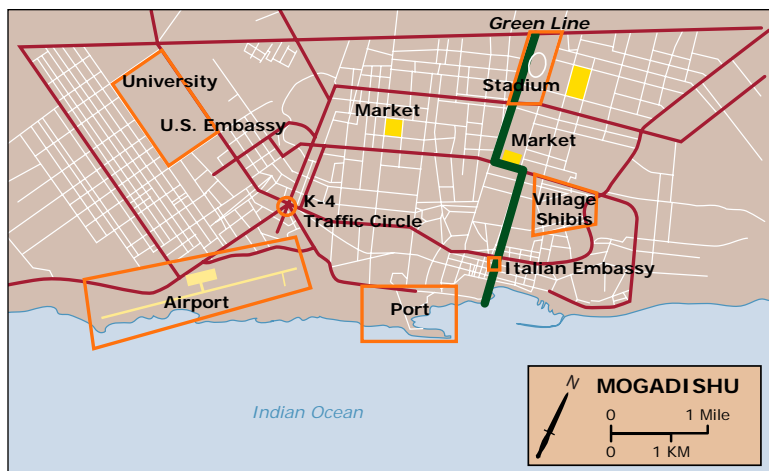
Fighting between Aided's and Ali Mahdi's factions divided Mogadishu into two armed camps. By the time Mahdi controlled northern Mogadishu and Aided controlled southern Mogadishu, 14,000 had been killed and 40,000 wounded. North and south Mogadishu was divided by the "Green Line" which followed Via Hiram north, then east on the Sinai Road, and north again along Via Mohammed Harbi. While the fight to control Mogadishu raged in 1991, the Somali National Movement established a separate government in northern Somalia, named Somaliland (the old British Somalia) and independent from Somalia. By then, internal law and order in Mogadishu had disintegrated to a point that U.S. diplomatic and UN personnel were evacuated by U.S. Navy



General Mohammed Farah Aided



Ali Mahdi Mohammed



Map of Mogadishu showing the division of the city after the cease fire.

helicopters (USCENTCOM Operation EASTERN EXIT).

Constant fighting and drought-induced famine spread starvation nationwide. The International Red Cross and the Somali Red Crescent Society, at great risk, supplied food to the Somalis. Food replaced water as the new tool of power. Starvation captured the attention of the United Nations. Once committed to humanitarian relief, the UN headquarters in Somalia went through difficult, frustrating, and confusing periods from August 1992 through March 1995.

UN involvement in Somalia began when World War II ended. The British Army had captured Somalia from Italian forces. The country was made a ward of the UN Trusteeship Council in 1949. In 1950, the United Nations appointed Italy as the trustee responsible for Somalia. The Italian government was to prepare the country for independence by the end of 1960. The problem was that Somalia was not prepared to be a democracy. Major General Said Barre's overthrow of the democratic government in 1969 conveyed the impression that the country could be united under socialism. The UN Development Programme (UNDP) invested heavily in Somalia's rural development. The UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) had begun providing \$70 million a year in aid to the Somali refugee camps in the early 1980s.⁷ As Barre's power base began to diminish in the late 1980s, he conscripted men and supplies and garnered protection money from the camps. The UN negotiated a cease fire between the Aided and Mahdi clan militias in Mogadishu in April 1992.⁸

The collapse of law and order led to continued human rights abuses such as rape, murder, torture, destruction of food, and contamination of water. Mass starvation resulted. Human rights and humanitarian relief organizations attempted to reduce the lawlessness by getting the international media focused on Somalia's problems.

The UN did not become involved in Somali internal affairs until its Department of Humanitarian Affairs was established in 1991. UN Under Secretary-General James Jonah was sent to Mogadishu in January 1992 to perform

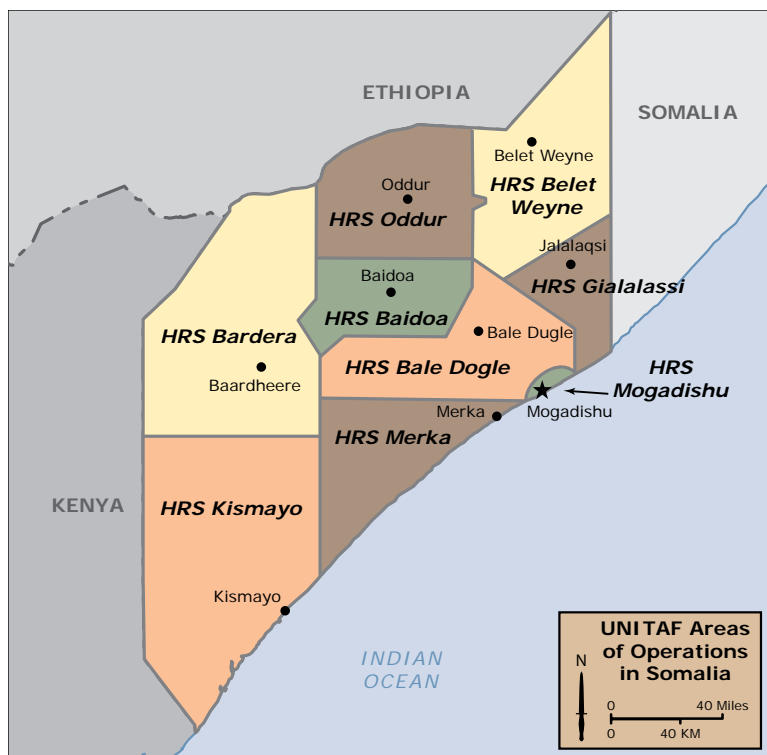
an in-country assessment of the situation. Jonah's report prompted the UN Security Council to pass Resolution 751 on 24 April 1992. The resolution allocated more than \$20 million in food and ordered 550 Pakistani peacekeepers to Somalia. These initiatives became the basis for formal UN-headquarters involvement to exercise some control over events in Somalia. The UN never managed to get positive control over the situation. The world organization was essentially ineffective. Its agencies were not properly staffed, equipped, or trained to take charge and manage the resolution of problems. During UNOSOM I, UNITAF, UNOSOM II, JTF SOMALIA, and UNITED SHIELD, the United Nations was only capable of directing humanitarian activities and coordinating Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) efforts. The TF Ranger raid to capture Aided during UNOSOM II was the result of the UN's inability to conduct combat operations and deal with the subsequent consequences. Aided's hatred for UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali—because he had supported Siad Barre—made him suspect all UN nation-building efforts.

The UN was never able to accomplish population disarmament because the United States did not support the program. President George H. W. Bush concurred with his ground commanders' assessments: disarmament was unnecessary and impractical based upon the quantity of weapons in the country. President Bush believed that a conciliatory approach to the warlords would reduce tension and assist relief operations.⁹ Most UN efforts were

UNOSOM I	Aug–Dec 1992
UNITAF	Dec 1992–May 1993
JTF Somalia	Oct 1993–Mar 1994
UNITED SHIELD	Jan 1994–Mar 1995



UN shoulder patch and tab



UNITAF Humanitarian Relief Sector (HRS) Map.



Variety of weapons taken at Checkpoint Condor south of Merca by the U.S. forces.

performed by an overly bureaucratic staff that possessed little in-country expertise and could not agree among its members. The absence of strong UN leadership fragmented the individual national relief efforts. There was no central direction. The only forces that provided any consistency during the entire Somali experience were U.S. Army Special Operations Forces. The ability of Special Forces, Civil Affairs, and Psychological Operations soldiers to operate independently and as members of a coalition force made them true force multipliers.

Special Forces (SF) involvement in Somalia began during the Reagan administration, long before Operation PROVIDE RELIEF in August 1992. Security Assistance served a dual purpose: it established U.S. influence and promoted regional stability. The program included foreign military sales (FMS), international military education and training programs in the United States (IMET), mobile training teams (MTT), and combined exercises with all the U.S. defense services. Small, three- or four-man Technical Assistance Fielding Teams (TAFTs) from the 5th Special Forces Group (SFG) spent a year at a time in Mogadishu providing light infantry, anti-tank missile, and urban military operations training to the Somali Army. These Security Assistance programs continued until 1989. Human rights abuses associated with Barre's atrocities on the people of Northern Somalia ended U.S. support.

Special Forces did not return to Somalia until President Bush directed Operation PROVIDE RELIEF be conducted on 13 August 1992. This time, the 5th SFG was to protect the transportation and delivery of relief supplies from Mombassa, Kenya, to airfields in Somalia aboard U.S. military aircraft. While force protection was the primary mission, the 2nd Battalion, 5th SFG teams also conducted medical and airfield assessments, assisted U.S. AID, UN relief agencies, and NGOs with food distribution, as well as establishing liaison with local factions and clan elders.

When Operation PROVIDE RELIEF ended and Operation RESTORE HOPE began on 8 December 1992, Special Forces was tasked to support the Unified Task Force



5th SFG SATMO MTT—1982 Americans (left to right): Sergeant First Class Bill Rambo, Master Sergeant Henry Beck, Sergeant John Haines, Colonel Marvin Rosenstein, and Captain Jerry Hill.

(UNITAF) Humanitarian Relief effort as part of the coalition force package. SF ODAs from the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 10th Special Forces Groups performed coalition support team (CST) duties for incoming foreign troop elements. Once the coalition elements had been settled, the CSTs, except for the 5th SFG teams, returned to the United States.

Unlike conventional military units manning static positions in and around Mogadishu and other major cities, the 5th SFG teams moved into the countryside. There, they established a U.S. presence, maintained liaison cells with neighboring coalition elements, conducted additional Civil Affairs (CA) and PSYOP missions, performed area assessments, conducted route reconnaissance, gathered information and intelligence, and provided border surveillance (where applicable). Special Forces established rapport with local populations, performed demining operations, coordinated humanitarian activities with



5th SFG SATMO MTT—1982, Captain Jerry Hill with the commander of the Somali Commando Brigade (fourth from right) observing TOW missile launch.



SF performing a Humanitarian Assistance delivery in Belet Weyne.

NGOs, and evaluated the general health conditions in their areas of operation. Unlike Special Forces, CA work in Somalia was not officially sanctioned until UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 794 was passed on 3 December 1992, to support the U. S. Operation RESTORE HOPE.

U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) CA planning had already begun. When the UN Resolution passed, the CA staff position in the Joint Operations Section (J-3) of the UNITAF staff was filled. Under the provisions of UNSCR 794, CA was tasked to secure ports and airfields, to facilitate safe passage of relief supplies, and to assist the UN and NGOs with humanitarian relief. UNITAF Headquarters later changed the CA's primary mission to one of minimizing civilian interference with military operations.¹⁰ Experience proved that the CA mission was much easier to accomplish when supported by PSYOP.

The 4th Psychological Operations Group (POG) began preparing for operations in Somalia in August 1992 to support Operation PROVIDE RELIEF. Since CENTCOM considered PROVIDE RELIEF a "low-profile" mission, no PSYOP products were produced nor personnel deployed. It was different for Operation RESTORE HOPE. Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston (USMC), the UNITAF

commander, wanted PSYOP "up front" with the intention of preventing armed conflict.¹¹ A Joint PSYOP Task Force (JPOTF) of 125 personnel was formed by Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Charles

Staff Sergeant Jimmie Wilson, ODA 562, checking for mines with a mine detector near Belet Weyne.



Sergeant First Class Alan Beuscher, ODA 562, uncovering a Russian TM46 Mine during SF demining operations.

P. Borchini, the 8th PSYOP Battalion commander. The JPOTF was under the staff supervision of Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni (USMC), the JTF J-3. The 8th PSYOP Battalion provided the JPOTF command and control element and directed the PSYOP Development Center and PSYOP Dissemination Battalion assets. The 9th PSYOP Battalion furnished two Brigade PSYOP Support Elements and eight Tactical PSYOP Loudspeaker Teams. PSYOP soon discovered that it too was rapidly becoming a force multiplier much like its SF counterparts.

A UNITAF mission for Special Forces was to support demobilization of Somali factions. During one of these missions, Sergeant First Class Robert Deeks, while driving a Desert Mobility Vehicle (DMV), was killed by a landmine. The senior medic was the only active duty SF soldier killed in action in Somalia. There were two distinct changes during the transition from Operation RESTORE HOPE (UNITAF) to Operation CONTINUE HOPE (UNOSOM II) in May 1993. First, operational control of U. S. military forces was given to the United Nations. Second, the Somali factions were more willing to violently engage coalition forces. In Mogadishu, Special Forces snipers manned static positions and rode helicopters to reduce hostile fire from Somali crew-served weapons and sniper activity. While SF elements assisted in maintaining order in Mogadishu, UNITAF established a Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC) on 11 December 92. The CMOC was co-located with the Headquarters UN Operation Somalia Humanitarian Operations Center. By 13 December 1992, a CA Tactical Headquarters Support Team of six personnel that arrived to augment the CMOC operated by the UNITAF J-3. The



*5th SFG
beret flash*



96th CAB DUI



9th POB DUI



8th POB DUI



9th PSYOP Battalion HMMWV mounted with loudspeakers escorted by 10th Mountain troops broadcasting in Kismayo.

CMOC became the focal point for all Somali humanitarian relief operations and the direct liaison to the JTF headquarters.¹² To provide CA assistance to coalition and U.S. military units and NGOs in the countryside, Company C, 96th CA Battalion sent six Direct Support Teams of four men each to various locations in Somalia.

The JPOTF, based on LTG Johnston's guidance, arrived in Somalia with two major themes: the JTF could carry out its promises and could meet force with force if necessary, and the JTF treated all groups equally during the humanitarian operations. Several mediums were to be used. The most effective PSYOP products proved to be face-to-face discussions, radio and loudspeaker broadcasts, leaflets, posters, coloring books, and handbills. The most successful were newspaper and radio broadcasts. Both were labeled "RAJO" which is the Somali word for truth. During RESTORE HOPE, PSYOP applied pressure on Aideed to reduce violence in Mogadishu, and tried to convince the Somali people to cooperate with UNITAF and its coalition forces.¹³

On 4 May 1993, the UN assumed full control of mili-



Special Forces sniper doing pre-mission preparation for "Eyes Over Mogadishu" mission.

tary and humanitarian operations in Somalia as part of Operation CONTINUE HOPE (UNOSOM II). During transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II, it became apparent that the UN command was unprepared and unsure how to proceed. Special Forces missions did not change. They had no role with TF Ranger. Only after the ill-fated attempt to capture Aideed failed did they become involved. SF provided DMVs with TOW anti-tank missiles to the quick reaction force and their medics to assist at the U.S. military hospital in October 1993.

The CA profile was lowered to preclude further "mission creep." The CA presence during CONTINUE HOPE consisted of a major (O-4), a three-man Direct Support Team (DST) to fulfill G-5 and S-5 (CA officer) staff requirements, and another DST with the quick reaction force. CA personnel rotated every ninety days. This policy prevailed until December 1993 when a Reserve component DST (39A) arrived in Somalia. It stayed until the CA mission was declared ended four months later.

The UN had no internal PSYOP capability. The UN command wanted the UNITAF PSYOP personnel and equipment to stay and perform the same missions for



Sergeant First Class Robert Deeks, ODA 562 SF medic, treating boy.

Special Forces sniper position K-7 in Mogadishu.





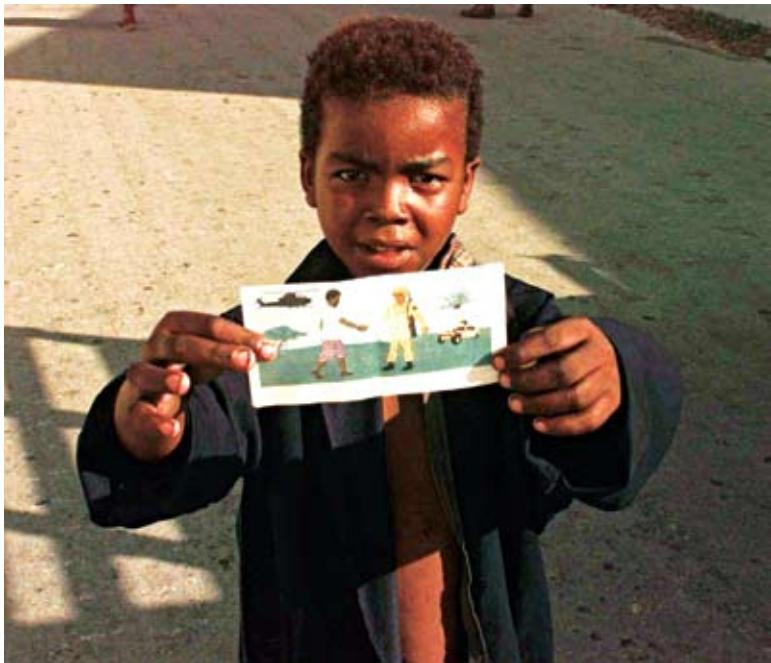
CA soldier distributing humanitarian relief supplies.



PSYOP leaflet drop.



CADST-34. Left to Right: (rear) Major Robert Biller, Sergeant First Class Pete Cooper, Master Sergeant Eddie Ricord, and Staff Sergeant Greg Haberman; (front) translators Omer Mohamed and Suad Yusef.



Somali boy holds leaflet from UNITAF PSYOP Campaign.



SF medic with MI interpreter during a MEDCAP.



9th PSYOP Battalion soldier distributing RAJO newspaper in Kismayo.

them. The request was not sent until 3 May 1993. In the interim, four active component sergeants remained in Somalia for an additional sixty days to man a Tactical Loudspeaker Team in support of the Army Forces quick reaction force. After the JPOTF was shut down on 4 May 1993, a PSYOP Task Force (POTF) was not reestablished until 13 October 1993 under the control of the Joint Task Force Somalia. The number of loudspeaker teams was increased. Until its departure in March 1994, the POTF coordinated operations and plans with the U.S. Information Service. It was more of an information sharing forum because the U.S. Forces Somalia PSYOP campaign was not as active as it was under UNITAF. Operation RESTORE HOPE (UNITAF) was the only effective psychological operation to go to Somalia in August 1993. The UN leadership in Somalia did not understand PSYOP and how to capitalize on its capabilities.

While the UN command continued organizing, increased Somali violence was directed toward coalition forces. Intelligence determined the instigators were members of Aideed's Somalia National Alliance (SNA). On 5 June 1993, SNA militiamen killed twenty-four Pakistani soldiers. On 6 June 1993, the UN Security Council approved Resolution 837 and authorized Secretary General Boutros-Ghali to investigate, arrest, bring to trial, and punish the Pakistani's attackers. General Mohammed Farah Aideed was identified

as the person responsible for the attack. Retired U.S. Navy Admiral Jonathan Howe, the UN Secretary General's personal representative in Somalia, initiated an arrest warrant and offered a \$25,000 reward for Aideed's capture. Howe and Boutros-Ghali also requested the Clinton administration's assistance in providing a special operations task force dedicated to capturing Aideed. General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; General Michael Hoar, Commander, USCENTCOM; and Secretary of Defense Les Aspin initially did not support the request. However, after landmine attacks in Mogadishu against U.S. personnel on 19 and 22 August 1993 wounded ten U.S. soldiers, Powell, Hoar, and Aspin reversed their position and directed TF Ranger to go to Somalia.

TF Ranger was composed of 440 U.S. Special Operations Command personnel from the 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Benning, Georgia; the 1st Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, Fort



Army SOF soldiers fast-roping out of a 160th SOAR MH-60L Black Hawk helicopter.

Campbell, Kentucky; and other special operations forces. The TF mission (GOTHIC SERPENT) was to capture Aideed and his key leaders in order to end clan fighting in and around Mogadishu.¹⁴

Based on the mission, 1st Battalion, 160th SOAR, provided sixteen special operations helicopters, crews, and ground support personnel (four AH-6, four MH-6, and eight MH-60L Black Hawks). The AH-6 "Little Bird" attack helicopter was armed with a 2.75-inch, seven-shot rocket pod and a 7.62mm, six-



AH-6 "Little Bird" with rocket pods and miniguns.



MH-6 "Little Bird" rigged for a fast-rope insertion.



Aideed wanted poster in the Somali language.



Pakistani M-113A2 armed personnel carriers at the U.S. Embassy Compound October 1993.

barrelled mini-gun. The MH-6 “Little Bird” lift helicopter had external benches to carry six combat assault personnel. The MH-60L Black Hawk was crewed by a pilot, copilot, and two crew chiefs and was capable of transporting as many as eighteen assault troops. The Black Hawk standard armament was 7.62mm mini-guns operated by the crew-chiefs. When specifically configured as a Defensive Armed Penetrator, the MH-60L could carry seven-shot 2.75-inch rocket pods and/or wing-mounted 30mm M-230 chain guns.

Six attempts were made to capture Aideed between 29 August and 21 September 1993. Several of Aideed’s key lieutenants were taken. This temporarily disrupted his organization. The seventh attempt occurred on 3–4 October 1993, when intelligence sources reported that Aideed was in Mogadishu in the area of the Olympic Hotel. The TF conducted the assault, but became surrounded by Somali militia forces. After eighteen hours of intense combat, TF Ranger broke contact with the help of a 10th Mountain Division battalion supported with the Pakistani and Malaysian armored vehicles. Total TF Ranger casualties were eighteen killed, eighty-four wounded, and one missing in action. Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael J. Durant, 160th SOAR, was held captive until 14 October 1993. President William J. Clinton directed that TF Ranger return to the United States on 19 October 1993. The special task force was in Somalia for a total of fifty-six days. When America’s finest force failed to capture Aideed, it had major consequences.

After the TF Ranger debacle, the U.S. government’s resolve to “fix” Somalia’s problems began to waiver, as did that of the other countries providing military forces to the UN. Coalition forces began planning to withdraw. The 5th SFG was the only U.S. force continuously



An observation position in the vicinity of Mogadishu airport.

involved in Somalia from August 1992 until March 1995. The final Special Forces mission in Somalia was to provide sniper coverage for coalition forces around the Mogadishu airport while assisting the U.S. forces withdrawal in Operation UNITED SHIELD. The ARSOF mission in Somalia officially ended on 3 March 1995.

Today the situation in Somalia remains just as confusing as it was from 1992 to 1995. There have been changes in leadership. But, as long as the individual Somali’s first allegiance remains to his clan, Somalia will not progress from a country of independent clans to a unified nation.

As with all experiences, the passage of time brings reflection. Initially, Somalia began as a humanitarian assistance operation, but very quickly changed to one of confrontation and conflict. Several factors contributed to this situation:

- a. The UN took very little interest in conditions in Somalia from its independence in 1960 until the media began to publicize the effects of factional civil war on the population.
- b. When the UN finally decided to assist, there was no forceful united presence to direct relief efforts.



U.S. Marine Corps Landing Craft Air Cushion lands on the beach in Mogadishu to effect the exfiltration of troops and equipment.



*75th Ranger
Regiment DUI
26 Veritas*



USASOC DUI



*160th SOAR
DUI*

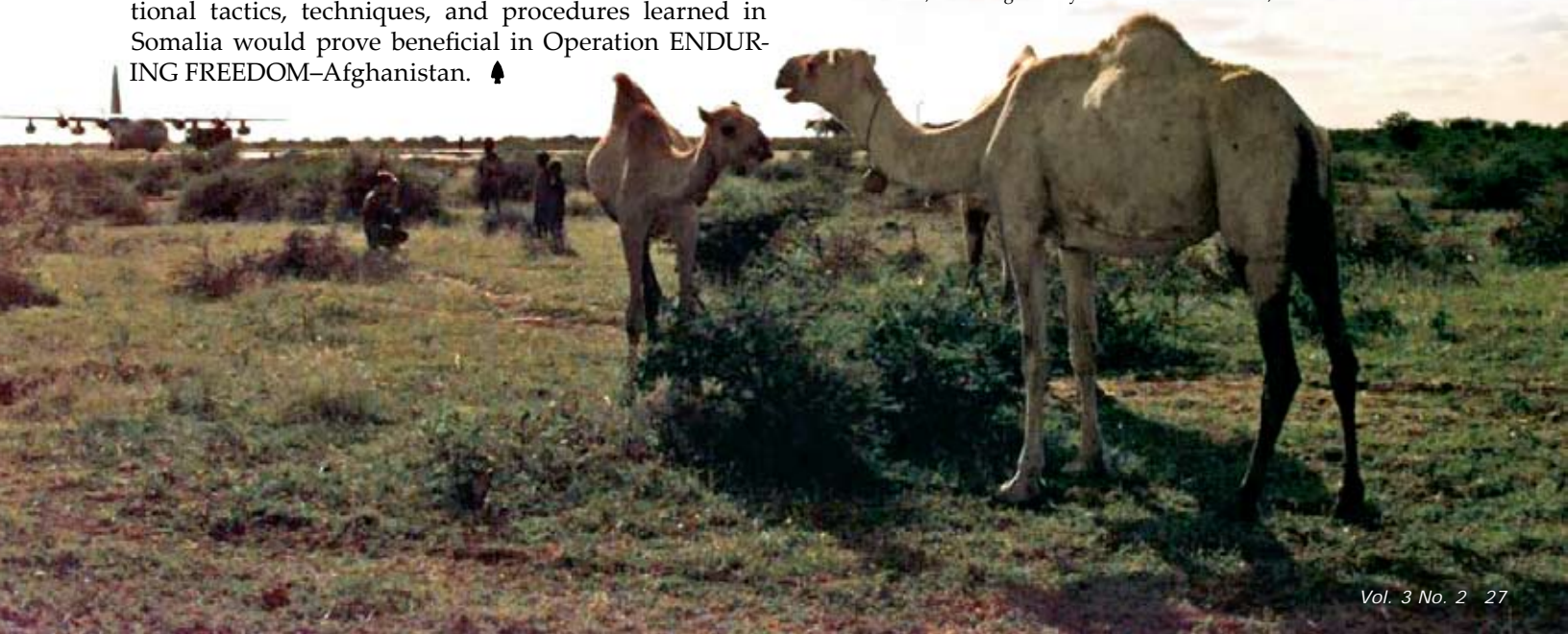
- c. The UN command in Somalia was not equipped, staffed, knowledgeable, or prepared to conduct the multitude of tasks required to accomplish the mission.¹⁵
- d. No plans or conditions had been established to decide when to release coalition forces back to their own countries.
- e. National organizations, such as a police force or interim government, were never established to gain and maintain population controls.¹⁶
- f. The most important negotiations concerning Somalia's future were conducted with warlords and militia chiefs, and not clan elders.
- g. Most coalition forces had little understanding of the culture, people, and situation in Somalia prior to arriving there.
- h. Psychological operations were not as successful after the UN assumed control of the operation on 4 May 1993.¹⁷
- i. Somali human intelligence sources were never fully developed or employed to provide information or warnings about possible outbreaks of violence.
- j. Very little coordination was conducted between coalition force units so none fully understood the others' capabilities and limitations.¹⁸

This article was presented to serve a three-fold purpose. First, to introduce and provide an overview of ARSOF in Somalia. Second, to preview a forthcoming book describing ARSOF operations in Somalia. Third, to show that while Task Force Ranger's mission was important, it was a very small part of the overall ARSOF contributions to the Somalia experience. ARSOF in Somalia proved its versatility throughout its involvement by assisting fellow U.S. Army units, other U.S. services, coalition forces, Non-Governmental Organizations, and the United Nations. Army SOF became the "force of choice" for these type operations. The skills and operational tactics, techniques, and procedures learned in Somalia would prove beneficial in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM–Afghanistan. ♣

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We Badly Needed Something to Do*

*T/5 Daniel Morgan

Glider Jumping At Camp Mackall, 1943

by Troy J. Sacquety

CAMP Mackall, North Carolina, now a training area for Army Special Operations, was the headquarters of the U.S. Army Airborne Command during World War II. It was named for Private John Thomas Mackall, 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion, one of America's first paratroopers killed in action. Mackall was wounded by a strafing Vichy France fighter aircraft on 8 November 1942, and died of his wounds four days later. It was at Camp Mackall that the 11th, 13th, and 17th Airborne Divisions were activated and trained. It was also where the U.S. Army Airborne Command evaluated airborne tactics and techniques and tested equipment. One dicey test was to jump paratroopers from towed gliders. After six tests, the method was deemed impractical and too dangerous for both jumpers and the jump platforms. The activity is a little-known aspect of Camp Mackall's history.

The unit chosen for the test was the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion (PIB). The 551st, known as the GOYAs based on commanding officer Lieutenant Colonel Wood C. Joerg's favorite expression, "Get Off Your Ass!" was a unique unit.¹ It became one of only two independent parachute battalions that saw action in WWII, the 509th PIB was the other one. The GOYAs were formed to guard the Canal Zone against possible Axis attack. When an infantry battalion was sent to Panama, the jungle-trained GOYAs were reassigned to Camp Mackall on 8 September 1943. There, they remained until 11 April 1944, when they left for Italy. By the time the GOYAs arrived at Camp Mackall, they were bored and itching for excitement. They welcomed the opportunity to test new parachuting techniques.

Camp Mackall was an ideal location for the U.S. Army Airborne Command to validate airborne tactics and techniques. In contrast to its current size of 7,916 acres,

the Camp Mackall area encompassed more than 70,000 acres in WWII, counting the adjacent civilian-owned land where the Army had maneuver rights. Much of the area collectively known today as the North Carolina-owned Sandhills Wildlife Areas was part of Camp Mackall during the war. This large expanse provided a large maneuver area for the airborne-forces-in-training that surrounded what became a small "city" in the Carolina Sandhills. Mackall was also close to the Army airfield at Laurinburg-Maxton and in an area that was free of commercial air traffic.

In October 1943, the Airborne Command decided to evaluate the suitability of CG-4A Waco gliders as paratrooper delivery platforms. The logic was that with paratroopers simultaneously jumping from two CG-4As and their C-47 Skytrain tow aircraft, then the number of combat paratroopers jumped could be doubled. It was anticipated that the paratroopers would land in a more compact group, thereby avoiding a scattered drop.² The fact that the towing C-47s would be flying so slow, however, meant that the entire flight would be "sitting ducks" for anti-aircraft fire. Technician Fifth Grade Daniel Morgan recalled that a few weeks after the 551st got to Camp Mackall, LTC Joerg volunteered for jump testing. "Notices appeared on the company bulletin board calling for volunteers . . . signature sheets immediately filled to overflowing, for we badly needed something to do."³ Lieutenant Richard Mascuch does not remember volunteering. He recalls being told that he would be jumping from gliders later that day.⁴

In all, paratroopers of the 551st made six test jumps from



The unofficial insignia of the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion. The Spanish motto "Ater-rice y Ataque," means "Land and Attack."



Lieutenant Colonel Wood G. Joerg, Commander, 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion



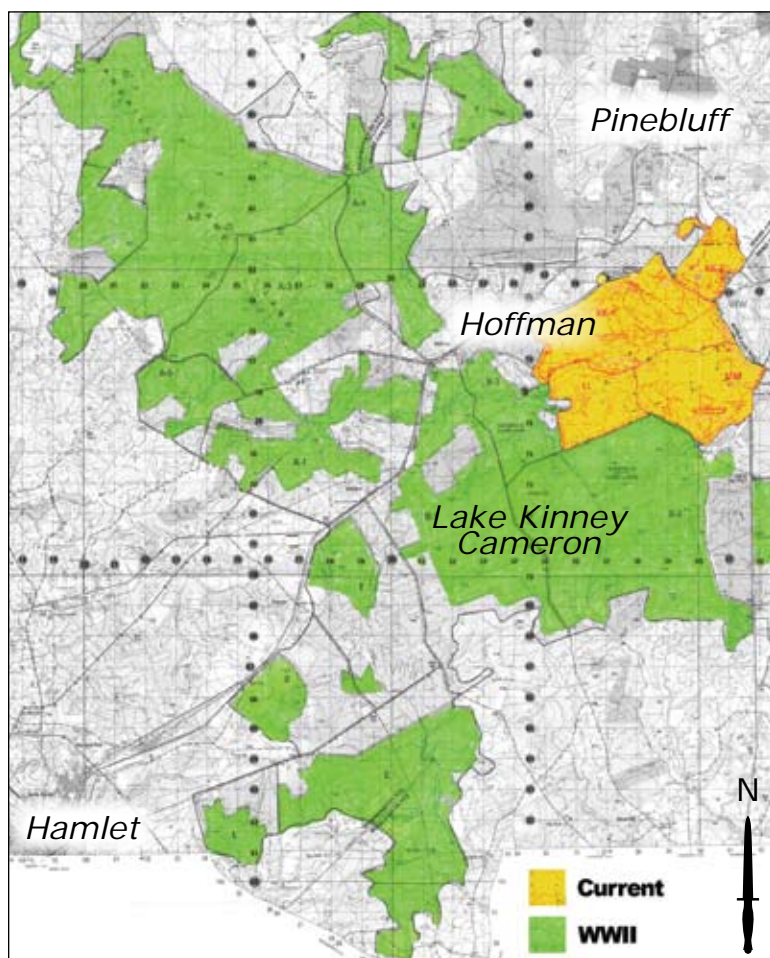
the CG-4A Waco glider from late October 1943 to November 1943; five at Camp Mackall and one at Alachua Army Airfield in Florida.⁵ The first test jump took place at Camp Mackall on 18 October. It was followed the next day by another with some eighty paratroopers involved. On the 20th, a few paratroopers flew from Camp Mackall to Florida for their first demonstration jump.⁶ Back at Camp Mackall, on 21 October, a demonstration jump was made for British and American "top brass," which included a British Air Marshall, Lieutenant General Lesley J. McNair, Commanding General Army Ground Forces, and Major General E.G. Chapman, Commanding General of the Airborne Command.⁷ Staff Sergeant Jack Carr recalled that the men jumped on a drop zone that was concealed by a grove of trees, where fresh troops lay hidden. After the paratroopers had landed, the other group left their hiding places and rushed out into the clearing to show the assembled "brass" that the experiment was an unqualified success!⁸

In reality, the glider jump tests were anything but successful. Gliders had not been designed for jumping

and the experience was unique. Richard Field recalled thinking, "What the hell am I doing in this thing! They were built like model airplanes. I was so happy to get out of those things."⁹ Alfred Garrety remembered that "the ride in the 'Flying Coffin' was bumpy. . . . I kept a firm grip on one of the wooden structural members as I had the feeling that the plywood floor would collapse at any time."¹⁰ Paratroopers jumped out both sides of the



Camp Mackall in 1945.



Map showing present (yellow) and former (green) sizes of Camp Mackall.



For the Camp Mackall glider tests, the paratroopers would board the WG-4A Waco gliders at Laurinburg-Maxton Army Airbase. This group of 551st paratroopers are seen milling around on the tarmac prior to loading into the glider.

glider. If they did not jump out in unison from the opposite doors, the glider was thrown off balance and it would “heel over on one wing.”¹¹ As George Brower related, “A failure of the static lines to pull equally created a rocking effect that caused the last men to have to crawl out on their hands and knees.”¹² Staff Sergeant Charlie Fairlamb put it more colorfully: “There were five men on one side and six on the other. . . . I was the last man out—the glider lurched, and I was half-way out the wrong door. I knew I was supposed to go out the other one, but I was kind of hanging in the doorway. . . . I gave one push and hit the thin plywood flooring, skidded across and went right out the other door like I was doing a swan dive. I was in a terrible position . . . so my chute malfunctioned. I was coming down and couldn’t find my ris-

Tragedy at Lake Kinney Cameron

TESTING and validating airborne techniques was not without risk. On 16 February 1944, the GOYAs made an ill-fated night jump. In contrast to Panama, the C-47s were flying in tight “V” formations, making the battalion-sized jump on the narrow landing zone of 1,600 by 2,000 feet even more complicated. Their first night airborne operation was conducted in fog and rain and they were flown by inexperienced troop-carrier pilots. The drop zone selected was a small clearing bounded by small lakes.¹ Many of the paratroopers were dropped into Lake Kinney Cameron. Several, unable to free themselves from their parachutes and equipment, drowned. 551st veteran Richard Field, then a private first class, recalls, “I landed about ten or fifteen feet from the lake. When I exited the plane, I could vaguely see an area that I thought could be the drop zone. But, when the noise of the planes faded, I could hear screams and splashing. I then realized that it was water so I slipped my chute as much as I could. . . . It was very dark and misty (almost rain.) As soon as I got my equipment and

harness off, I waded out into the lake and helped get some of the men out of the water. As you can imagine, it was a hell of a mess. The jump should have been aborted. I think about forty men actually landed in the lake and eight of them drowned.” The tragic accident was revealed by Drew Pearson of the *Washington Post*. The tragedy convinced the U.S. Army to adopt the parachute harness quick-release system used by the British.² Difficulties in wartime production meant that most U.S. paratroopers used the old system.

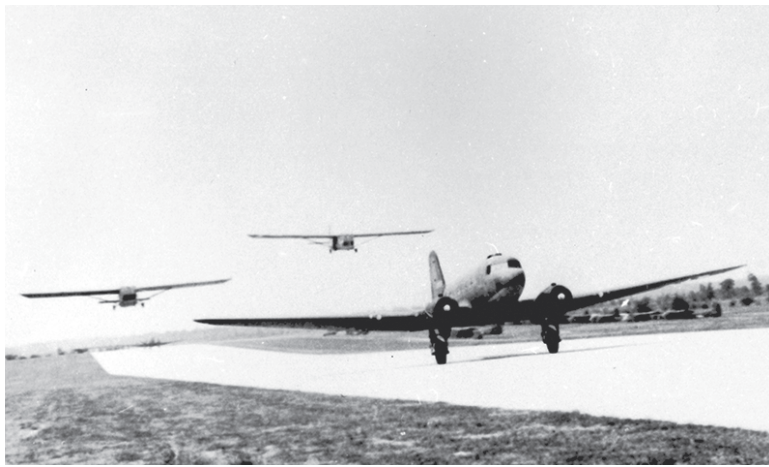
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- 2 Gregory Orfalea, *Messengers of the Lost Battalion: The Heroic 551st and the Turning of the Tide at the Battle of the Bulge* (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 7; also see Drew Pearson, “The Washington Merry-Go-Round,” *The Washington Post*, 9 March 1944.



Lake Kinney Cameron near where the eight 551st PIB paratroopers drowned on 16 February 1944.



In 1992, the 551st Parachute Infantry Association placed a memorial stone to those who drowned in Lake Kinney Cameron on 16 February 1944. Permission was granted by the State of North Carolina because that area is beyond the current boundary of today's Camp Mackall. Those memorialized are Private First Class Shelley C. Ferguson, Technician Fifth Grade John F. Hoffman, Private First Class Kenneth D. McGrotty, Private First Class Ishmael H. Petty, Sergeant Benjamin Preziotti, Private First Class Zollie Ramsey, Private First Class Norval L. Reed, and Private John L. Wafford.



In the glider jump tests, a C-47 aircraft would tow two paratrooper-laden CG-4A Waco gliders.

ers. . . . I spun around—not smart enough to open my reserve. I spun until I was almost horizontal, but I was lucky on the landing. . . . As difficult as our training was, I still appreciated it. I was almost glad to get into combat though; it was easier than the training.”¹³

Glider balance was not the only problem. The glider’s cargo compartment was cramped. Wearing a full combat load did not help. Albert Garrety explained his jump on 31 October: “common sense would tell a person that it couldn’t happen for real. The door was too small, if it were approached standing up, one would have to duck down to get out. The top of your backpack would hang up on the frame otherwise. The door was approached in a duck walk fashion with 130 pounds of equipment. . . . One didn’t jump out of a glider, they waddled up, ducked down, and fell out. The only difference [with jumping] from a plane was the drop was farther because there wasn’t the prop blast to help open the chute.”¹⁴ On landing, Garrety went into a backward somersault. When someone asked if he were all right, he replied that he had a “perfect three-point landing, my feet, my ass,



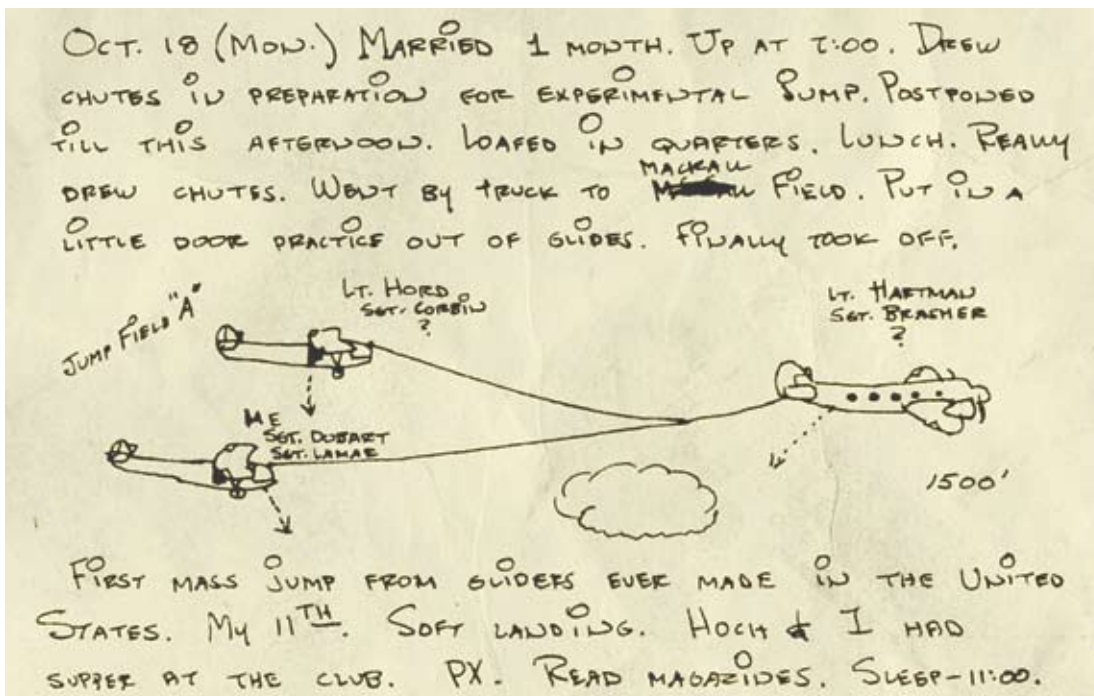
This photo reveals how cramped it was inside a CG-4A when carrying eleven fully loaded paratroopers.

my head.”¹⁵

Another serious problem was the glider. It had to be specially rigged. First, the doors from both sides were removed. Then static line anchor cables were mounted and six personnel seats were installed on each side.¹⁶ Many veterans commented on the problems associated with loads on the anchor lines. Technical Sergeant Robert Van Horssen related, “I heard that when Sergeant Blaiszik jumped (he was pretty big) he pulled the anchor-line cable right out of the glider with him.”¹⁷ Technician Fifth Grade Daniel Morgan added, “That happened more than once. The cable bracket would pull out of the glider’s forward bulkhead. Fortunately, the cable-bracket U-bolt remained fixed to the anchor-line cable end, thus retaining all the anchor-line snap fasteners. When these particular gliders landed, the anchor-line cables were hanging out of their



Qualified glider pilots were authorized to wear the glider pilot wing.



Lieutenant Richard Mascuch kept a wartime diary that tells of his jump and of life at Camp Mackall.



Lieutenant Richard Mascuch demonstrates how small the CG-4A glider door was. Jumpers had to avoid hitting themselves on the head or catching their backpacks on the top of the door.

The 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion

THE 1st Battalion of the 551st Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR) was activated at Fort Kobbe, Panama, on 1 November 1942, under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Wood C. Joerg. Subsequent battalions were never activated, thus the 1/551st became a separate Parachute Infantry Battalion (PIB). The 551 PIB, or GOYAs, (coined by LTC Joerg, meaning “Get Off Your Ass”) were to protect the



Canal Zone. In May 1943, the 551st was preparing to parachute assault on the Vichy-French-controlled island of Martinique in the Caribbean. It was feared that German submarines would seek safe harbor and resupply at the island. The French commander, given an alternative to an attack, turned the island over to Free-French control. As a result, in August 1943, the 551st was ordered to Camp Mackall, North Carolina, to validate air drop techniques and to test airborne equipment. In March 1944, the GOYAs were then sent to Italy.

Prior to their first combat jump, the men of the 551st camouflaged their faces with grease paint.

The 551st PIB became part of the Operation DRAGOON assault element of the First Airborne Task Force, under the command of Major General Robert Frederick. During the invasion of southern France, the GOYAs got their “baptism of fire” on 15 August 1944, making a daylight combat jump near Le Muy. On 18 August 1944, the battalion liberated Draguignan because the French Resistance feared German reprisals. Since this was the first major city in southern France liberated by the Allied forces, the 551st

PIB was awarded the Croix-de-Guerre with Silver Star.¹ In doing so, they surprised Generalleutnant Ferdinand Neuling, the German LXII Corps Commander and his staff, and the German regional commander, Generalmajor Ludwig Bieringer. Capturing them effectively neutralized German command and control in the area. As part of the Seventh U.S. Army’s right flank, the GOYAs fought eastward along the French Riviera, and helped liberate Nice and Cannes. By late fall 1944, the 551st had pushed the Germans into the Maritime Alps. That winter, the jungle-trained GOYAs became ad-hoc mountain troops. Ski patrols became the routine in the snow-covered area as they performed holding actions for the next three months. After being relieved by the 100th Infantry Battalion on 17 November 1944, the GOYAs enjoyed a short respite in St. Jeannet, France, near the Italian border.

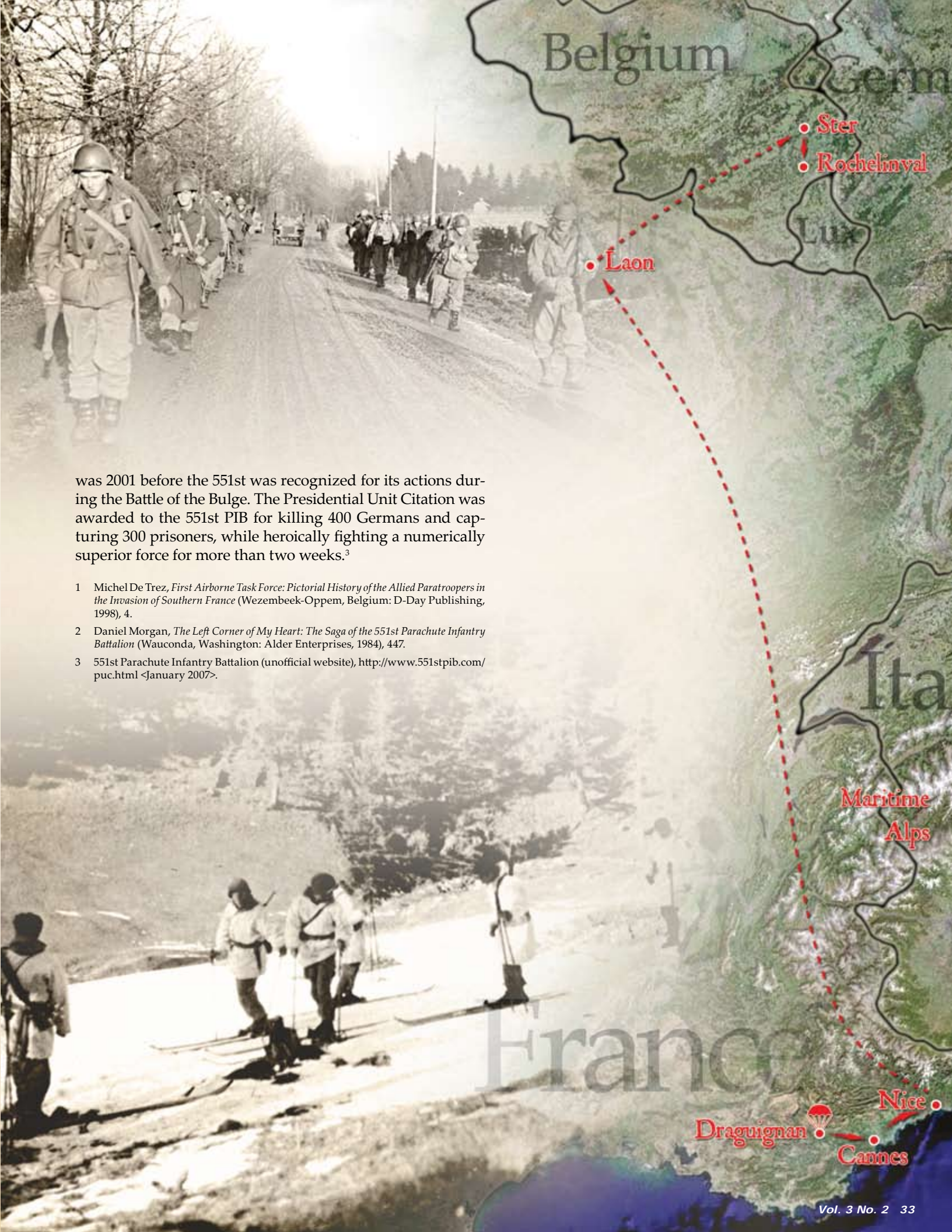
The Battle of the Bulge put the GOYAs back into action on 21 December 1944. Attached first to the 30th Infantry Division near Ster, Belgium, they were quickly diverted to the 82nd Airborne Division to support the 508th PIR. During the first ten days of January 1945, the 551st saw brutal action and had many cold weather injuries on account of the harsh winter. On 7 January the battalion was ordered—against the protests of LTC Joerg—to frontally assault the town of Rochelival, Belgium. Well-registered German artillery and devastating machinegun fire decimated the battalion. Lieutenant Richard Durkee, an A Company platoon leader who assaulted directly into Rochelival, remembered: “I yelled at [Private Pat Casanova] to get the riflemen up to me so we could continue the attack. . . he shouted back, ‘Sir, they’re all dead’. . . I found out I was now company commander of a company of nine men.”² B Company, attacking from the rear, fared little better. By the second week of January 1945, the battalion was down to company strength, and most of its officers, including LTC Joerg, were dead. Declared combat ineffective, the 551st PIB was deactivated on 10 February 1945. Most of the survivors were reassigned to the 82nd Airborne Division. It



Shown here is the 15 August 1944 daylight combat airdrop of the 551st PIB over southern France as part of Operation DRAGOON.

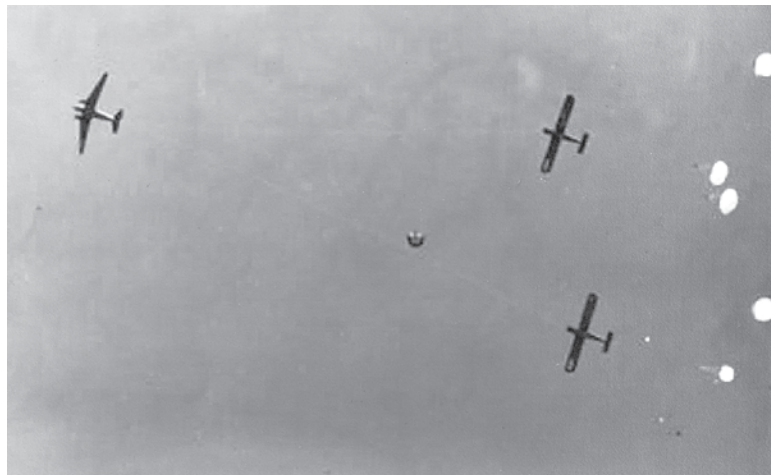


As the 551st entered towns in southern France they often received an enthusiastic welcome. Shown here is Private First Class Richard Field riding in the back of a jeep trailer on 29 August 1944 in Nice.



was 2001 before the 551st was recognized for its actions during the Battle of the Bulge. The Presidential Unit Citation was awarded to the 551st PIB for killing 400 Germans and capturing 300 prisoners, while heroically fighting a numerically superior force for more than two weeks.³

- 1 Michel De Trez, *First Airborne Task Force: Pictorial History of the Allied Paratroopers in the Invasion of Southern France* (Wezembeek-Oppem, Belgium: D-Day Publishing, 1998), 4.
- 2 Daniel Morgan, *The Left Corner of My Heart: The Saga of the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion* (Wauconda, Washington: Alder Enterprises, 1984), 447.
- 3 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion (unofficial website), <http://www.551stpib.com/puc.html> <January 2007>.



Seen from the ground are 551st paratroopers exiting the towed gliders.

doors with all the static lines bunched at the end of the cable.”¹⁸

Parachuting was difficult, but flying the glider while men were jumping out was no picnic either. Glider pilot Gale Ammerman recalled that, “when each man jumped, the glider load was reduced by somewhere around 200 pounds. As a result, the nose of the glider came up at the time each man exited from the glider. . . . By both me and my copilot pushing forward on the controls and adjusting the trim tab, we eventually got the glider back into normal position just above the C-47.”¹⁹

After two more experiments, on 31 October and a final one in late November, the 551st PIB troopers were finished with glider jumping.²⁰ After several injuries, the Airborne Command determined that gliders were not a viable parachute platform. Lieutenant Richard Mascuch, veteran of five of the six glider jumps, felt that the gliders were a viable platform for parachute jumping, but flying at near stall speed, the C-47 tow plane and its covey of CG-4As was too vulnerable to ground fire.²¹ However, the spirit of the 551st PIB earned a citation from Major General Chapman. In part it read, “. . . the Commanding General has noted the fine spirit existent in the 551st Parachute Battalion which prompted many volunteers to hazard tests in parachute jumping of a type which has not been done before. The test conducted . . . materially contributed to the progress of parachuting. The unselfish cooperative attitude expressed by individuals of the battalion insured success of tests in jumping from both doors of gliders in double tow.”²² These parachuting experiments had left the mark of the GOYAs on Camp Mackall. ♣

I wish to thank 551st veterans Colonel Doug Dillard, Richard Field, and Dick Mascuch; Les Hughes for providing several of the images and the 551st unit patch; Lowell Stevens for help with the Camp Mackall portion; and the Airborne and Special Operation Museum for providing photos of their CG-4A.



Camp Mackall memorialized the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion by naming a road after the unit.

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Endnotes

- 1 A more polite, if not false, explanation for GOYA is “Great Outstanding Young Americans.” One finds it hard to believe 18–25-year-old soldiers getting “charged up” by this expression. According to 551st veteran Richard Field, Lieutenant Colonel Joerg called the men of the 551st his “GOYA-birds.”
- 2 Gregory Orfalea, *Messengers of the Lost Battalion: The Heroic 551st and the Turning of the Tide at the Battle of the Bulge*, (New York: The Free Press, 1997), 75.
- 3 Daniel Morgan, *The Left Corner of My Heart: The Saga of the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion* (Wauconda, Washington: Alder Enterprises, 1984), 94.
- 4 Richard Mascuch, telephone interview by Troy Sacquety, 1 March 2007, notes, USASOC History Office Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 5 Orfalea, *Messengers of the Lost Battalion*, 76.
- 6 Richard Mascuch, diary, 17 October 1943–2 November, 1943, copy of select pages, USASOC History Office Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 7 Mascuch, diary.
- 8 Morgan, *The Left Corner of My Heart*, 99.
- 9 Richard Field, interview with Troy Sacquety, Fort Bragg, NC, 28 February 2007, notes, USASOC History Office Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 10 Albert P. Garrety, unpublished memoir, (Redwood City, CA, circa 1986), ii.
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- 12 George Browder, *The Road to Tokyo* (unpublished, undated), 42–46, quoted in Tom MacCallum and Lowell Stevens, *Camp Mackall: and its Times in the Sandhills of North Carolina*, unpublished manuscript, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 13 Morgan, *The Left Corner of My Heart*, 94, 99.
- 14 Garrety, unpublished memoir, ii.
- 15 Garrety, unpublished memoir, ii.
- 16 George Browder, *The Road to Tokyo*, 42–46.
- 17 Morgan, *The Left Corner of My Heart*, 99.
- 18 Morgan, *The Left Corner of My Heart*, 99.
- 19 Silent Wings Museum newsletter, *Glider Paratroopers, Part II*, 8.
- 20 Mascuch, diary; Orfalea, *Messengers of the Lost Battalion*, 77.
- 21 Mascuch interview.
- 22 Morgan, *The Left Corner of My Heart*, 98.

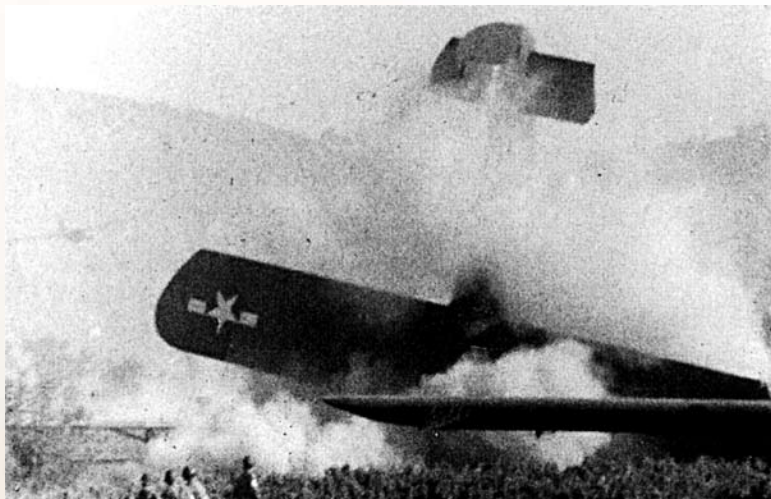
The CG-4A Waco Glider

by Troy J. Sacquety

EARLY in World War II, the successful use of airborne forces by Germany shocked the world. The Germans used their glider-borne forces in the assault of the “impregnable” Belgian fortress Eben-Emael on 10–11 May 1940, and they combined parachutists with gliders when they invaded Crete in May 1941. These events prompted greater American military interest in airborne forces and the use of combat gliders. By 1942, the U.S. Army Air Corps had a prototype that would later become the American workhorse of World War II. The CG-4A Waco had a wingspan of eighty-four feet, a length of forty-nine feet, and could carry 3,750 pounds.¹ It was constructed of plywood and canvas stretched over a tubular steel frame. A C-46 or a C-47 cargo aircraft could tow it. The CG-4A had a crew of two. The standard combat troop load was thirteen glidermen. If heavier equipment was transported, the interior of the CG-4A could be modified to carry

a combination of glidermen, a jeep, a loaded jeep trailer, light truck, miniature bulldozer, 75mm pack howitzer, or a light anti-tank gun. The cargo was loaded through the CG-4A’s nose section which could be flipped up to allow access. Nearly 14,000 CG-4As were built at an average cost of \$18,800. In a combat environment, the often heavy damage they suffered and the air assets required for retrieval caused them to be regarded as disposable.²





Casualties among glider pilots and riders were often high in combat. This glider is shown flipping on its nose while "landing" during Operation DRAGOON, the invasion of German-occupied southern France.

Flying in them was a unique experience. Ned Roberts, a writer for the *United Press*, described his experience during a demonstration glider flight: "Under tow . . . we found gliding to be much like riding in a transport. The wind's roar, as the transport pulled us through the air at close to 150 miles an hour, made fully as much noise as the plane's engines. At 2,000 feet, they cut us loose, and the *Dallas Kid* [the name of his glider] promptly bounced straight up for 400 feet. That's when I lost my stomach. . . . Through the transparent nose of the *Dallas Kid*, we could see the air base and surrounding cotton patches [below] spinning around like a huge pinwheel."³ The evasive maneuvers associated with a combat flight would have made the ride that much more harrowing, especially when the pilots were "fighting" for open spaces to land.

Corporal Charles Fairlamb, 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion, described gliders landing in Operation DRAGOON, the invasion of southern France: "I've never seen a more awful sight in my life, some gliders landed upside down, some came down on one wing only, while others crashed into trees. I saw one jeep being tossed out of a glider while it was still in the air, and another vehicle crashed through the nose . . . all in all, it was a very sickening sight."⁴ Sergeant Douglas Dillard, a fellow 551st paratrooper, watched another glider hit a tree line. "We



A restored CG-4A Waco Glider is on display at the Airborne and Special Operations Museum, Fayetteville, North Carolina.

ran over to see if we could help, but they were all mangled and there was no sign of life."⁵ Private Sam Povich of the 517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team remembered the glider "smacking in" and that the casualties were tremendous. He watched as one glider crashed so horribly that it appeared as if no one could be alive "in that coffin, but they all made it out."⁶ Private David E. Grange, also of the 517th, recalled his reaction to the gliders landing. "We thought it was incoming artillery when they began crashing in, and we began looking for cover."⁷ Even the gliders that landed safely risked being hit by other incoming gliders. However, gliders did perform their combat mission of quickly—if not crudely—bringing in heavier equipment and more personnel than could be delivered by airdrop.

In Europe, gliders were used in airborne operations in Sicily, France, the Netherlands, and Germany, and in the Far East in Burma and the Philippines. However, once the war ended, they quickly became obsolete. By 1953, the U.S. Army no longer trained glidermen. Yet, evidence of the large U.S. Army glider program can still be found in and

CG-4A Waco gliders were used in several operational theaters during WWII. Here, a glider flown by the 1st Air Commando, is being used by OSS Detachment 101 in Burma in 1944.





The photo on the left illustrates the pilot's compartment of the CG-4A Waco glider. On the right is the skeleton of another nose compartment which was pulled from a Camp Mackall swamp in the summer of 2006.

around Fort Bragg. The Airborne and Special Operations Museum (ASOM) in downtown Fayetteville, North Carolina, has one of the few remaining CG-4A Waco gliders on permanent display. In the summer of 2006, the nose section of a CG-4A was rescued from a Camp Mackall swamp. Plans are underway to transform this artifact into a memorial to the U.S. Army glider troops and the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion paratroopers who jumped from it at Camp Mackall during WWII. ♣

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- 6 Sam Povich, interview by Dr. Charles Briscoe, Fort Bragg, NC, 6 March 2007, notes, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
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OSS Detachment 404 and Operations in Southeast Asia

by David G. Knapp

OSS operations in Thailand and Southeast Asia are less well known than the activities of the OSS in Burma (Detachment 101) and China (Detachment 202). However, the activities of Detachment 404 in Thailand were politically important to setting the stage for U.S. foreign policy in Southeast Asia during the Cold War. To appreciate the contributions of Detachment 404 that promulgated the post-war relationship with the government of Thailand, it is necessary to explain the complex command relationships that affected the OSS in the China-Burma-India (CBI) theater of operations. Early in the war, the Pacific commanders, Admiral Chester W. Nimitz and General Douglas MacArthur, barred the OSS from their areas of operation. It was Lieutenant General Joseph “Vinegar Joe” Stilwell’s CBI Theater that provided the

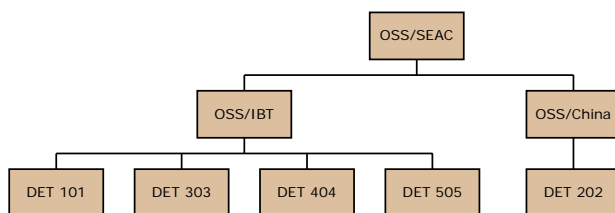
OSS its only entrance into Asia.

One of the results of the Quebec Conference in September 1943 was the creation of a separate Allied Command for Southeast Asia (SEAC). Quebec was the site of one of several strategic planning conferences conducted during the war. There, the political and military leadership of the Allied nations met face-to-face to discuss war strategy. British Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten was named the Supreme Allied Commander, Southeast Asia (SEAC). LTG Stilwell, U.S. commander in the CBI theater, became the deputy supreme commander. SEAC was created to bring some unity and new energy to a theater comprised of distinct countries (India, Burma, China) with often competing Allied and U.S. service interests.¹

In November 1943, Major General William J. Donovan, the head of the OSS, met with Lord Mountbatten in New Delhi, India, to discuss expanding OSS operations in Southeast Asia. The agreement reached between Donovan and Mountbatten resulted in a reorganization of the OSS in Asia. At that time, Detachment 101 and various OSS headquarters and liaison personnel were focused on the China and Burma theater. Donovan conceded a change of authority for OSS activities from the U.S. theater commander, LTG Stilwell, to “P” Division of the SEAC headquarters. “P” Division, headed by a Royal Navy captain with an American deputy, was the staff section responsible for all clandestine activity in the theater (espionage, sabotage, propaganda, etc.). In return, Detachment 101 retained its tactical autonomy as an allied guerrilla force operating in northern Burma. It



Lieutenant General Joseph Stilwell (left) and Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten (right) confer in March 1944. Notice that Stilwell, associated with his other role as Commanding General, Chinese Army in India, is wearing a Chinese Army cap.



OSS Organization in the South East Asia Command circa January 1945.

was essentially exempt from SEAC operational oversight. They also agreed that the OSS could only provide U.S. intelligence directly to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington instead of routing it through SEAC headquarters to the Allied Combined Chiefs of Staff in London.²

The creation of SEAC and the resultant reorganization of the theater, combined with Donovan's desire to expand OSS operations, resulted in the creation of Detachment 404 and OSS/SEAC. Detachment 404 had oversight and operational responsibility for all OSS activities in SEAC except Burma and China. OSS/SEAC functioned as a planning headquarters that oversaw all OSS activities in the theater. In the summer of 1944, the U.S. War Department prepared a proposal to divide the CBI into two separate theaters—China and India/Burma. This split was effective by October 1944, coinciding with LTG Stilwell's departure.

The reorganization of the CBI caused the OSS in Asia to create two regional headquarters that mirrored the split of the theater: OSS/India-Burma (OSS/IBT) and OSS/China. Many of Detachment 404's senior staff officers were transferred to OSS/IBT. Detachment 404's Operational Groups (OGs) were also reassigned during the winter of 1944–1945, and many of its operators were assigned to Detachment 202 (China) due to the extreme difficulty of mounting and supporting OG operations over the vast distances of Southeast Asia.³

Despite all of the command and control changes and resultant headquarters, Detachment 404 conducted operations in southern Burma, Siam (Thailand), Malaya, the Andaman Islands, Sumatra, the adjacent islands of the Dutch East Indies, and southern Indo-China during its twenty-one months of service. Extensive Research and Analysis (R&A) and counter-intelligence operations (X-2) were conducted in India and Ceylon (Sri Lanka).⁴

Detachment 101 provided important organizational lessons learned from its combat experiences in Burma. Therefore, Det 404 found that team specialization for its SI (Strategic Intelligence) and SO (Special Operations) teams was unnecessary and counterproductive to missions into denied territory. Det 404 directed that each SO or SI team therefore be trained and prepared to perform all aspects of guerrilla operations, sabotage, espionage, and intelligence collection and reporting.⁵ During the period 1944–1945, Detachment 404 transmitted some 2,400 intelligence reports to OSS/Washington; trained 215 indigenous agents (many of whom were brought in from enemy territory); air dropped over seventy-four tons of supplies, ammunition, and arms; and conducted 125 SO and SI operations.⁶

Into this morass of "Confusion Beyond Imagination"

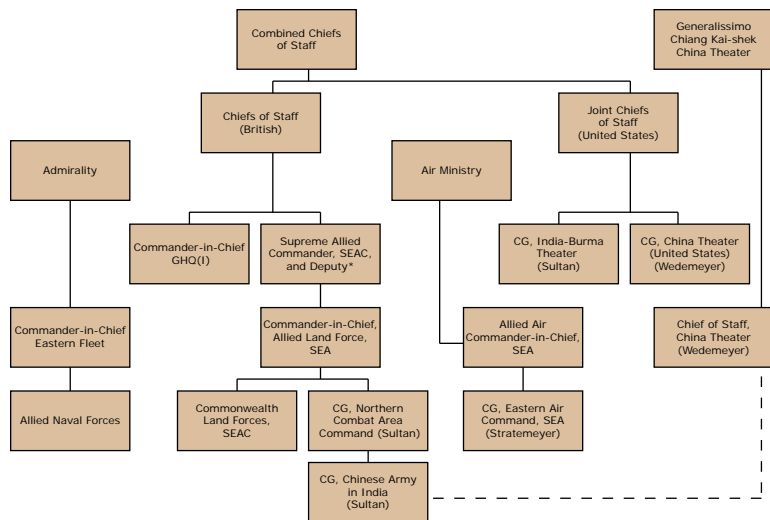
came Private First Class (PFC) Peter L. White. At the age of eighteen, in August 1944, White entered the Army from Nantucket, Massachusetts. He was inducted



CBI SSI



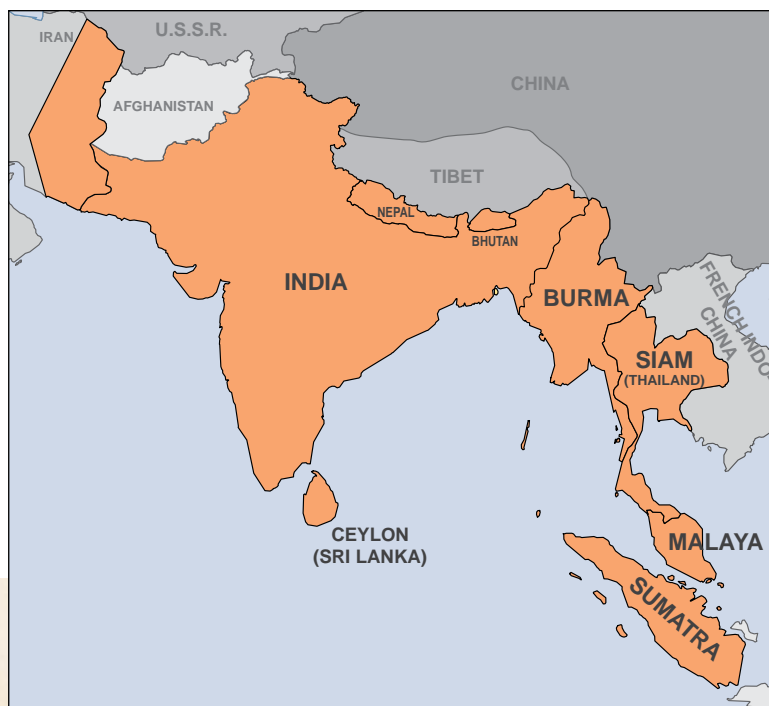
SEAC SSI



*Lieutenant General Raymond A. Wheeler, U.S. Army, was Deputy SAC, SEA.

This chart reflects the Allied Chain of Command in South East Asia in November 1944 following Lieutenant General Joseph Stilwell's recall. This complex command arrangement for the CBI is why it was often called the "Confusion Beyond Imagination" theater.

in Boston after informing his local draft board that he was volunteering. "I preferred not to wait," said White. After initial processing at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, he was shipped to Fort Riley, Kansas, for training as a cavalryman. Many bemoan the demise of the horse cavalry at the onset of the war, but White was *really* the last class that was actually trained on horseback as "mounted riflemen." He departed Fort Riley for advanced combat training at Fort Ord, California. On 7 February 1945, PFC White departed the states aboard the USNS *General Mann* bound for India. After a layover in Melbourne, Australia, White was shipped to Bombay in March 1945. From there he was sent to a theater replacement depot outside of Calcutta. The trip from Bombay to Calcutta on an Indian troop train was, according to White, "a memorable ordeal



The India-Burma Theater 1944–1945.

Detachment 404: Selected Operations in SE Asia

- ♣ Operation RIPLEY: In June 1944, an Indonesian agent was landed in Sumatra to collect intelligence. The agent was arrested upon landing, but managed to convince the Japanese to release him. He later provided important intelligence on the Indonesian Republican movement.
- ♣ Operation BALMORAL: In September 1944, a team of four American OSS agents and a Malay radio operator were landed in the Mergui Archipelago to establish a coast-watching and weather station. Increased enemy activity caused the team to be withdrawn after five months of successful operations.
- ♣ Operation NOAH: In December 1944, a Maritime Unit plan to capture a Chinese Junk, crew it with OSS personnel, and cruise the Malacca Straits to collect intelligence was largely unsuccessful. The unit did manage to establish a coast-watching station that operated for several months.
- ♣ Operation CAIRNGORM: In November 1944, a team of three American OSS agents and three Chinese agents were parachuted into Malaya to contact Chinese guerrillas. The team was instructed to “remain in the jungle until the end of the war.” Incredibly, it did join up with a small band of guerrillas and harassed the Japanese for months. The team suffered no casualties and rejoined Allied forces at the end of the war.
- ♣ Operation SALAD: During 1944–1945, seventy-four tons of weapons and equipment were airdropped to the Thai guerillas.
- ♣ Arakan Field Unit: In 1944–1945, a 175-man force of Detachment 404 was attached to the XV Indian Corps on the Arakan coast of Burma. The unit passed to the operational control of Detachment 101 when the CBI was reorganized. The AFU conducted numerous short duration Maritime Unit and OG operations before going to Rangoon, Burma, to exploit captured Japanese intelligence. They remained in Rangoon to support OSS operations into Thailand. The AFU was ultimately designated Detachment 505-A.



Private First Class Peter White and Private Eugene Schimdt at China Bay.

due to the sad state of the Indian railcars” and the “rather putrid air that surrounded us throughout the trip.”

While White was awaiting orders at the replacement depot, he performed a lot of guard duty, KP, and other mundane “details.” These included assisting the local MPs to “clean out the GIs from the brothels and bars” of Calcutta. One day, the young private saw a memo on the bulletin board soliciting “volunteers for hazardous duty.” Despite having already learned the age-old soldiers’ maxim of never volunteering for anything, “I did anyway,” remembered White. “The prospect of remaining any longer in the repo depot was both demoralizing and incomprehensible. I had to find a quicker way to anywhere. I didn’t know what the duty was or where I would go, but I did realize that it would get me out of Calcutta faster than waiting for my orders,” recalled White. Unbeknownst to White, a simple request to the first sergeant started the process of his matriculation into the OSS and assignment to Detachment 404. A lengthy security questionnaire was followed by an interview with an OSS officer. Then, White and six other selected volunteers from the Calcutta repo depot were sent to the “Racetrack” in Calcutta (literally the city horse-racing track) that housed a small OSS tent city. It was one of the Detachment 505 facilities in Calcutta.⁸ Detachment 505 was the logistical hub for Detachment 101 that was fighting in northern Burma. It subsequently became the logistical hub for all OSS detachments in China, Burma, and India.⁹

At the “Racetrack,” White and the other volunteers were administratively in-processed and then taken to Hasting’s Mills, another OSS camp about eighteen miles from Calcutta. From Dum Dum airfield they were flown



Detachment 404 officers planning an air drop operation into Thailand.

to Colombo, Ceylon, on a C-47 transport plane. Ceylon was the site of all Detachment 404 bases and facilities except the R&A and X-2 operations. These were conducted from New Delhi where they were co-located with Detachment 303. From Colombo, the OSS trainees were taken by truck to Galle, an old Portuguese colonial city on the southwest coast of Ceylon. Galle was the home of Detachment 404's OGs. These OGs were reorganized in the winter of 1944–1945, and the bulk of the operators transferred to Detachment 202 in China. However, White and his comrades received most of their brief training



Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten and Cora DuBois, chief of the Det 404 Research and Analysis section, in Kandy, Ceylon.

on British and Japanese weapons at Galle from the residual OG cadre. “We were all trained infantrymen so there was little in this training that was difficult or remarkable,” White remembered.¹⁰ After a week in Galle, these new OSS recruits were transported to “China Bay,” another Det 404 camp near Trincomalee. It was across the harbor from a larger installation housing a Royal Navy base and a Detachment 404 Maritime Unit responsible for maritime sabotage and intelligence operations and agent insertions.¹¹



A typical basha where teams lived at China Bay.

At China Bay, White and his team received parachute and other training. Parachute training consisted of platform jumps and parachute landing falls (PLFs) and a version of the 34-foot tower. It also included how to steer the parachutes and how to get out of the parachute harness after landing. They had no practice or training jumps—the first jump would be into combat. Additionally, they were trained on small unit tactics, demolitions, combat-ives, and jungle/survival training. “We received a specific block of instruction on railroad sabotage—how to derail a train and blow up the tracks,” White recalled. Notably, they received no language or communication training. A



OSS Missions and Bases in East Asia. Note: Site Y at Trincomalee was a separate facility for training indigenous agent recruits.



Small boat training at the Detachment 404 OG facility in Galle.

radio operator/translator was to be attached to the team later. "The conditions at China Bay were neither luxurious nor wretched. We lived in raised squad huts called 'bashas' that had open windows and palm thatched roofs, and we ate at a consolidated mess because we were on \$2.10 per diem. We ate like kings," said White.¹² It was here that White was assigned to a Special Operations team whose mission was to conduct sabotage and unconventional warfare, including the training and leadership of indigenous forces. White's team was led by Captain Norman Farquhar and included Private Ben Luck and Private Eugene Schmidt. The team soon learned that it was training for a mission into Thailand.¹³

The situation in Thailand was much different from that previously encountered by the OSS in enemy-occupied territory in Europe. Instead of resistance movements, there was a "patriotic governmental conspiracy against the Japanese in which most of the key figures of the state were involved."¹⁴ Thailand's status during the war is vaguely analogous to that of Vichy or German-occupied France, and to Hungary—a German ally allowed to retain its own government under quasi-German occupation. It became clear over time however, that a portion of the Thai ruling elite were opposed to Japan and that they hoped to keep Thailand from becoming drawn more deeply into the conflict. These conditions prompted a thorough review of American political and policy issues related to any planned operations in Thailand. Of concern was the fact that Thailand had declared war on the United States after Pearl Harbor as a notional Japanese ally, and that the Japanese military was stationed throughout the country. The British, Americans, and Japanese would dance to a "complicated minuet" around the possibility that the Thai opposition would rise against Japan and force Tokyo to divert badly needed combat troops in order to occupy Thailand and put down any overt resistance."¹⁵

Thailand was a "black hole" in terms of intelligence. To overcome this lack of intelligence, a team of "Free Thai" (agents recruited from Thai students who were attend-



Training on the 60mm mortar training at Galle. Pictured are OSS Detachment 404 members (left to right): Bruce Stone, John Hooker, Edward McGuire, John Cahill, Hess, and George Porter.

ing university in the United States at the beginning of the war) were trained by the OSS and then infiltrated via China in late 1944. This team discovered that the existing Thai Army, Navy, Air Force, and secret police were viable OSS sources of guerrilla and intelligence forces. Encouraged by the successes of the first team of "Free Thai" inserted into Thailand, General Donovan sent two OSS officers, Major Richard Greenlee and Major John Wester, to Bangkok in January 1945, to exploit these sources and to serve as direct OSS liaison to the Thai government.¹⁶

Greenlee and Wester were hidden in "plain sight" during the day in a palace adjacent to that of Prince Regent Pridi Phanomyong (codenamed "Ruth"). They quickly discovered that Pridi was the de facto head of the nascent Thai underground. The Prince Regent made it very clear that the Thais were prepared to revolt against the Japanese. However, they needed arms and training, which only the OSS and/or the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) could provide. A long-standing question of British post-war colonial ambitions further complicated matters. Pridi and the OSS officers in Bangkok were convinced that the British seriously harbored designs on Thai territory. Subsequent SOE attempts to allay the fears of the Thais could not convince the Prince Regent otherwise.

Given this pro-U.S. environment, Detachment 404 began planning to establish numerous clandestine airfields and



Prince Regent Pridi Phanomyong, also known as "Ruth."



SO team members in China Bay. Private Ben Luck is kneeling at the right front.

bases throughout Thailand to support the training of 10,000 guerrillas in twelve operating areas. Despite the Prince Regent's enthusiasm to confront the Japanese, he was advised by the OSS liaison officers, Greenlee and Wester, to wait for the planned Allied invasion of Thailand, scheduled for December 1945. This advice was based on the successes achieved by the large Filipino guerrilla army supporting U.S. operations to recapture the Philippines.¹⁷

The supply of the Thai forces by the OSS was a success with over seventy-four tons of supplies air dropped between February and August 1945. However, the guerrilla training program was less successful. Operation PATTERN sent the first SO team into Thailand in May 1945. The guerrilla training was to be limited in scope and "promote good will" to encourage Thai intelligence sharing. It was really in its infant stages at the time of the Japanese surrender. By the end of the war, only twenty-three American OSS operators were on the ground in Thailand. Despite the small number of OSS personnel on the ground, Detachment 404 managed to plan and execute an operation that capitalized on its close relationship with the Thais. In the confusion of the Japanese surrender, 296 Allied prisoners of war were evacuated from Bangkok by eight aircraft in August 1945.¹⁸

The dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki caused PFC White's mission to be scrubbed. His team never jumped into Thailand to train and advise guerrillas. White and his teammates, along with the

other enlisted men at China Bay, began breaking down the various OSS camps on Ceylon. White, based on the overseas points system, didn't make his way back to the states until February 1946. Despite the fact that the OSS had been ordered disbanded by President Harry S. Truman in October 1945, White was assigned to "Headquarters, OSS, Washington."



Insignia courtesy of Mr. Les Hughes

Free Thai Shoulder Sleeve Insignia worn by those Thai nationals recruited by the OSS in the United States.



Free Thai members of the OSS DURIAN operation pose in Trincomalee, Ceylon, with their trainers and advisors.

Following the presidential directive, large parts of the OSS organization transferred to the War Department and were designated as the "Strategic Services Unit" (SSU). The SSU was created to preserve many of the wartime capabilities built by the OSS. While assigned to Washington, White served as a classified courier and at one point was caught up in an instance of bureaucratic one-upmanship in a general's office. "The aide-de-camp insisted on taking the package and I insisted that the general had to sign for the classified material. I was very nervous, but I knew I was right," said White. "The general signed for the package."¹⁹ After leaving the Army, he attended the University of Arizona, graduated in 1951, and was commissioned as an armor officer (ROTC). He served in Germany and Fort Irwin, California, until 1958, when he joined the Bank of Boston to work in Brazil, Argentina, and Costa Rica.

The foresight of the creator of the SSU to preserve OSS wartime capabilities for what became the nation's civilian intelligence agency, the CIA, was matched by U.S. policy toward Thailand during the war. Both would



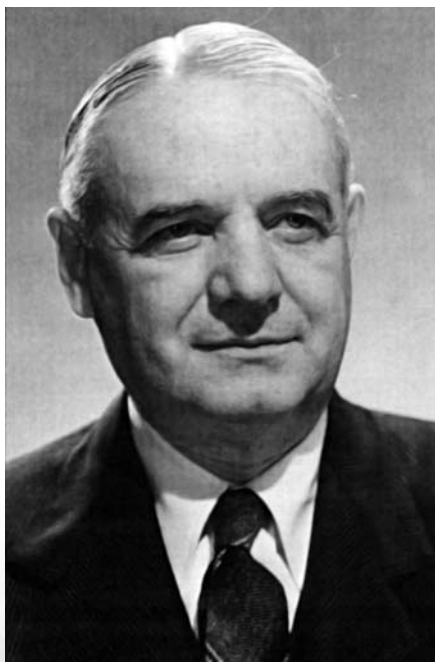
A British-operated C-47 Dakota being turned around at Phu Khieo airfield in Thailand June 1945.



SO Team YIELD in Thailand August 1945. OSS agents Petty Officer Don Gilbertson (front row second from left) and Captain Van Mumma (second from right). The Thais in the photo were police officers.

pay large dividends for the United States during the immediate post-war period and throughout the Cold War. The OSS presence in Thailand in 1945 and immediately after the war preserved the pro-U.S. feelings. The Thais responded to a “favored nation” status by loyally supporting the United States with ground and naval forces to the UN Command during the Korean War, and ground forces, under the auspices of the South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), and bases for U.S. forces in Thailand during the Vietnam War.²⁰

In the words of E. Bruce Reynolds, an eminent historian on the OSS in Thailand, “. . . the State Department shared the OSS view that the operations [in Thailand] might serve as the opening wedge for postwar American economic and political influence in Southeast Asia.”²¹ This truly coordinated wartime political effort set the stage for U.S. postwar policy towards Thailand. Preservation of Thai friendship was ensured by President Dwight Eisenhower’s appointment of Major General William “Wild Bill” Donovan, the founder and director of the OSS and the “father of the CIA,” to be Ambassador to Thailand in 1953. ♠



U.S. Ambassador to Thailand, William Donovan, circa 1954.

Thanks to my colleagues in the USASOC History Office for their intellectual rigor and their support during the preparation of this article.

Lieutenant Colonel David Knapp, USAR, served as an historian at the USASOC History Office in 2005–2006. He received his BA in history from the University of Wisconsin and his MS in International Relations from Troy State University. He has served in infantry and civil affairs assignments in Panama, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Germany, and Iraq. He completed a one-year tour as the Chief, Operations, C9 (CMO), MNF-I in 2004. He is currently serving as the commander of the 3-304th Infantry Regiment in the U.S. Army Reserve.

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Not Just Doing Logistics:

LTF 530 in Support of TF Dagger

by Kenneth Finlayson

FOLLOWING the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack that destroyed the World Trade Center, the United States targeted the Islamic-fundamentalist *Taliban* regime in Afghanistan which had taken over the country and provided support and refuge to the *al-Qaeda* terrorists. Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) spearheaded the ground campaign of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) that began in November 2001 and, by May 2002, drove the *Taliban* from power. Joint Special Operations Task Force-North (JSOTF-North) known as Task Force Dagger (TF Dagger) was formed around the 5th Special Forces Group (SFG) to conduct the campaign in the northern half of Afghanistan.¹ The logistical support to TF Dagger was provided by Logistics Task Force 530 (LTF 530). The focus of this article is the preparation and execution of the logistical support mission for TF Dagger as performed by the men and women of LTF 530.

The American forces could not stage directly into Afghanistan to begin operations against the *Taliban*. For the conduct of combat operations in the north, the U.S. forces established Camp Stronghold Freedom at the Karshi-Kanabad Air Base in Uzbekistan. Known as K2, the airfield became the operational and logistics center for TF Dagger beginning with the arrival of the advanced echelon (ADVON) on 6 October 2001.² K2, just across the northern Afghan border, quickly grew as troops and equipment flowed in.

Logistical support to ARSOF units within the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) was the responsibility of the 528th Special Operations Support Battalion (SOSB).³ A Company, 528th SOSB, commanded by

Captain Christopher Mohan, established the initial base and logistics operations at K2 and supported the build-up of forces in October and November. The long-range plan for support operations called for the deployment of the logistics task force into K2 to take over operations from the 528th, and to be prepared to move into Afghanistan to provide logistical support to JSOTF-North in the northern half of the country. The deployment of the logisticians began on 15 November 2001, and as LTF personnel arrived, they assumed the K2 mission.

Lieutenant Colonel Edward F. Dorman commanded LTF 530, which was task organized from assets of the 530th Supply and Services Battalion (S&S), of the 507th Corps Support Group (CSG), in the 1st Corps Support Command (COSCOM) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. From the 530th S&S came the 530th Headquarters and Supply Company (HSC) commanded by Captain Mathew Hamilton. The 58th Maintenance Company (General Support), 7th Transportation Battalion, 507th CSG led by Captain Judy Anthony formed the other half of the task force. The two companies, with augmentation, provided the entire range of logistical support.

Headquarters and Support Company's mission was to provide for the reception and distribution of most of the basic classes of Army supply: Class I (subsistence/rations), Class II (clothing and equipment), Class III (petroleum products), Class IV (construction materials), Class V (ammunition), Class VI (personal demand items such as toiletries), Class VII (major end items such as vehicles and weapons), Class VIII (medical supplies), and Class IX (repair parts). The production and distribution of potable



TF Dagger
symbol



528th Support
Battalion DUI



1st COSCOM
SSI



530th Support
Battalion DUI



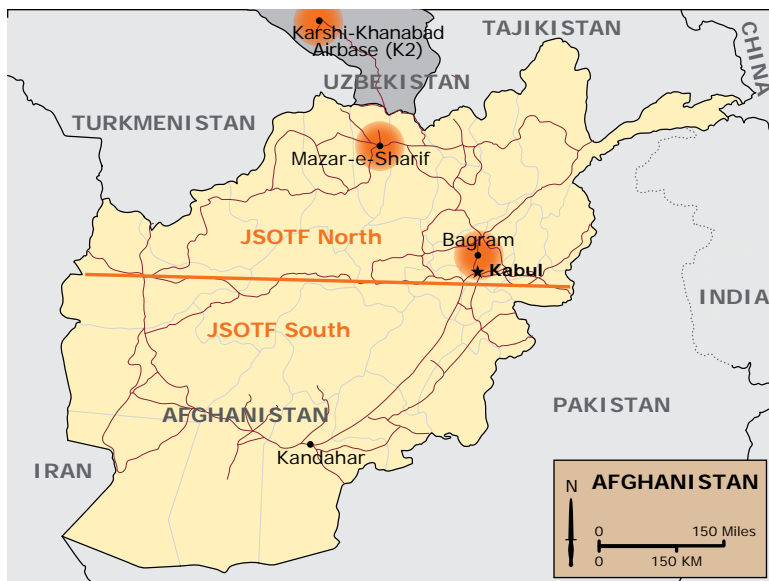
7th
Transportation
Battalion DUI



92nd Engineer
Battalion DUI



10th Mountain
Division SSI



LTF-530 deployed in support of Task Force Dagger. Initially based in Uzbekistan, the LTF eventually provided logistical support from three locations.

water and provision of general support services such as billeting, food service, laundry and bath facilities, and sanitation were also part of the company mission. The 530th HSC ran the Airfield Departure and Arrival Control Group (ADACG) that coordinated the flights in and out of K2 as well as managed the Humanitarian Assistance (HA) commodities flowing in.⁴ HSC had seventy-nine soldiers to accomplish these many and varied tasks.⁵ In a simplistic way, HSC took care of the troops on the ground while the 58th Maintenance Company took care of the equipment.

The maintenance and repair capability of the 58th encompassed wheeled vehicles, radio and communications security equipment, night vision equipment, power generators and equipment, welding and fabric repair specialists, and food service personnel. The fifty people of the 58th were augmented by a composite maintenance support team of twenty personnel that provided repair



The "Log-Ness Monster" on Lake Uzbek, K2.

capability for heavy engineer equipment, small arms repair, tracked vehicles, and other items not covered by the 58th.⁶ As is usual with logistics units, there were just a few personnel to cover each specialty area. When the task force assumed responsibility for the supply support activity (SSA) at K2, the 174 members of the LTF were stretched even more because the population at the air base continued to grow.

K2 was the intermediate staging base (ISB) for TF Dagger operations into Afghanistan. As more and more ARSOF troops were inserted into the country, it became apparent that TF Dagger would soon need to deploy forward into Afghanistan to continue to prosecute the war against the *Taliban*. By 15 November 2001, American Special Forces troops with their Afghan allies had joined with the British Royal Marines at the Afghan city of Bagram. The TF Dagger commander, Colonel John F. Mulholland Jr. directed LTC Dorman to do a site assessment of the former Soviet air base at Bagram as a potential site for TF Dagger in country. Accompanied by a team of engi-



LTF 530 established the Supply Support Activity (SSA) at K2, Uzbekistan and at Bagram and Mazar-e-Sharif in Afghanistan. The SSA at Bagram supported the operations of TF Dagger with all classes of supply and services.



Refueling point for vehicles established by the LTF at Bagram. Refueling of vehicles and aircraft was a major mission of the LTF.

neers, maintenance specialists, and airfield repair personnel, Dorman went to Bagram, twenty-five miles north of Kabul. By the end of December 2001, the LTF assets split between K2 and Bagram, and were providing base operations support for the growing K2 operation and establishing a new logistics hub at the Bagram airfield.⁷ The move to Bagram caused a quantum increase in mission for the LTF.

The arrival of tactical units expanded the mission of the task force beyond just “doing logistics.” It meant that the task force was charged with the entire reception and support mission in northern Afghanistan. This included running the airfield operations, providing medical support for all personnel, maintaining the proper level of force protection, as well as providing the facilities for housing and feeding the Coalition troops. A growing population of enemy detainees demanded the construction and manning of a proper detention facility. Much of the work on the base was accomplished with local labor procured through contracts negotiated by contract officers from the task force. Personnel and finance operations for the troops moving through Bagram were also part of the mission. Included in this complex operation was working with the different Coalition nations—especially in airfield operations and de-mining around the base.

First Lieutenant John V. Rios was the Airfield Arrival Departure Control Group (ADACG) platoon leader: “My primary mission was to run the ADACG and be the liaison between the Air Force TALCE (Tanker Airlift Control Element) and the Army. We would help prepare packages for shipment on fixed wing aircraft, like the C-130s and C-17s. We also set up sling-load operations and prepared a Class I, III, and V issue point to support Operation ANACONDA.”⁸ Rios and his platoon had initially run the busy ADCAG at K2. He left personnel in Uzbekistan to continue that mission.

The airfield at Bagram soon began to receive an increas-



A huge Russian Antonov An-124 aircraft and a U.S. C-130 on the airfield at Bagram in 2001. The chartered Antonov was the largest mass-produced aircraft in the world.



An MH-47E of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment. The Night Stalkers moved their operations to Bagram from K2, supported by LTF 530.



The communications center at Bagram. Communications were a vital part of the logistics support operations.



An Iranian Il-76 at Bagram. The chartered Soviet-made Il-76 delivered cargo and personnel for the Coalition.

ingly heavy volume of air traffic. U.S. Air Force cargo aircraft, special operations helicopters of the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR), and contract aircraft including the giant Antonov An-124 all started arriving at Bagram. The poor condition of the huge airfield at Bagram presented Rios and his team another challenge. Large sections of the runway had to be replaced. That mission was handled jointly by British and American troops under the direction of the LTF.

Runway repair is a major engineering project. The 10,000-foot runway at Bagram was built by the Soviet Union in 1976 and was one of the largest airfields in the country. British and American engineers worked to repair the most heavily damaged sections while flight operations continued around them. Working with their British counterparts, the American engineers dug up the broken slabs, cut them into sections using special con-

crete saws, and poured new concrete for the runway. Later the task force received additional help. In August 2002, a special Air Force runway repair team, the 200th/201st Expeditionary Red Horse Squadron came in. The Red Horse team replaced over 2,500 of the 11,000 11-foot by 13-foot concrete slabs on the runway.⁹ The bomb-cratered and damaged runway was just one reminder of the 10-year war between the Soviet Union and the Mujahideen. Throughout the area, extensive mine fields needed to be cleared. This was a daily mission for the Task Force and Coalition allies.

The proliferation of mines in and around Bagram made it imperative to clear every piece of ground prior to use. As the number of troops at the base increased, more and more cleared land was required to house and support the growing population. Mechanical mine-clearing equipment from three nations worked in unison under a plan developed and supervised by the LTF to clear and "certify" the ground as safe for habitation. Three types of mine-clearing equipment, "Aardvarks," "Mini-flails," and "MCABS" were used in this multi-national effort to clear mines.

The "Aardvark" was a large mine-clearing flail brought by the Norwegian contingent. The "mini-flail" was operated by the Jordanians and the MCAB (D9 Mobile Com-



The U.S. Air Force's Red Horse Squadron arrived in August 2002. The Red Horse Squadrons specialized in runway repair.



The removal of broken concrete slabs was the first step to repairing the damaged runway.



Special concrete saws were used by the engineers to cut the broken slabs into sections before removal.



Extensive excavation was required before new runway slabs could be poured. The landing of heavy cargo aircraft necessitated a major runway repair effort at Bagram.



The Aardvark mine-clearing vehicle used a chain-flail system to detonate the mines. It was operated in Bagram by the Norwegian contingent.



An effective mine-clearing device, the Aardvark was used extensively to prepare the area for occupation.



A smaller, remote-controlled mine-clearing vehicle, the Mini-flail, was operated by the Jordanians at Bagram.



The D9 Mobile Combat Armored Bulldozer was the primary mine-clearing vehicle in use by the 92nd Engineer Battalion.

bat Armored Bulldozer) was operated by members the 92nd Engineer Battalion (the Black Diamonds). The hollow “boom” of exploding mines became a daily feature of life at Bagram Airbase. Monitoring the areas of the base that were being cleared and identifying the newly demined terrain was a constant focus for the operations center of the LTF. The LTF Operations Center maintained a situation map of demining operations that was continuously updated. Safe lanes for foot and vehicle traffic were marked out and the destruction of unexploded ordnance by EOD (Explosive Ordnance Destruction) personnel attached to the LTF occurred daily. With more cargo coming in on the repaired runway and more acreage safely de-mined and usable, the LTF was able to gradually accommodate the ever-increasing troop population.

First Lieutenant Michael Kukiela began the deployment as the Fuel and Water platoon leader at K2. In December, he moved to Bagram as the Forward Logistics Element (FLE) commander to act as the ADVON for



Refueling vehicles in the early morning hours at Bagram. The litter of discarded Soviet equipment is visible through the ground fog.

the main body of the task force. Initially providing support to the troops of the 10th Mountain Division, Kukiela witnessed the build-up of ARSOF elements, Air Force personnel, and Coalition elements as they flowed into the base. "All the lieutenants had about four or five jobs. My people were stretched very thin and equipment was spread all over the theater. That led to maintenance issues. All the soldiers down to the lowest rank had to think like leaders and do what was needed to support the frontline fighters. At one point, I had troops at K2, Bagram, and Mazar-e-Sharif."¹⁰ Providing for fuel and water and the other classes of supply often meant local procurement of these items, which brought its own issues—politically and in terms of quality. "We had a guy who transported water in a truck that I swear was used in World War II. It had so many holes in it that I think it lost more water than it transported. He was never on time and my guys didn't like him much. However, he was related to the local warlord so he stayed employed," recalled Kukiela.¹¹ Dealing with the local population was a daily necessity for some members of the Task Force.

Master Sergeant Patricio Cardona was a platoon sergeant and the maintenance control supervisor of the 58th Maintenance Company. In addition to his regular duties, he dealt with the local populace as the unit contracting officer. "I was a Field Ordering Officer and had to ensure the acquisition of the proper items needed for the soldiers and the Airbase. This gave me a lot of interaction with the local population."¹² Taking on the onerous job of contracting officer was one way that Cardona ensured his people had what they needed. "We did not have enough resources or people, so I volunteered to become a Field Ordering Officer for ARCENT [Army Central Command, the Army component command of Central Command]. My biggest challenge was to manage all of my combat tasks with



Contracting Officers of the LTF were in daily contact with the local population. Many of the supplies and services provided by the LTF were obtained locally.

the amount of people assigned to me and to get them to slow down their pace of work for safety reasons."¹³ Working with the local population extended to the delivery of Humanitarian Assistance (HA) items.

First Lieutenant Valencia de la Vega, the Adjutant (S-1) of the 530th S&S Battalion, became the LTF S-1. Always a multi-faceted job, de la Vega found herself working personnel and finance issues, supervising mortuary affairs and orchestrating the visits of foreign dignitaries, which included Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld as well as local leaders.¹⁴ "I worked with the local population when trying to source materials and services we needed and I helped package and deliver the school supplies we gave to the local schools."¹⁵ The delivery of HA supplies was an additional LTF task. The mission expanded further when the LTF was directed to establish a Forward Support Base (FSB) in the key city of Mazar-e-Sharif to support the growing Coalition presence there.



Fuel to support operations was contracted and trucked from Pakistan.



Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Brigadier General Gary L. Harrell, U.S. Central Command, visit Bagram Airfield.



Specialist Jason A. Disney distributing Humanitarian Assistance items to the local population in Bagram.

Mazar-e-Sharif was critical to the flow of humanitarian aid and logistical supplies. The airfield was a focal point for supplies coming into the country. The city was the terminus of the main truck route for supplies from Uzbekistan. First Lieutenant John Rios sent a three-man team from his ADACG at Bagram to help run the airfield, stretching his assets even more.¹⁶ In November 2001, JSOTF-North sent a Civil Affairs team to Mazar-e-Sharif to coordinate the humanitarian assistance program for the Coalition. The Jordanians established a major hospital there and supplies started to flow in. In the early months of 2002, Mazar-e-Sharif became the center of a huge humanitarian assistance effort that ultimately provided over 700 tons of red wheat and winter clothing and toys for the local children.¹⁷ The establishment of the FLE at Mazar-e-Sharif expanded LTF service to three distinct locations, and was done basically "out of hide."

As the Headquarters and Supply Company commander of the LTF, Captain Mathew Hamilton was keenly aware of the impact that operating at multiple



The troop barracks at Bagram. The living conditions at Bagram were more spartan than those at K2.

locations had on his troops. "At K2, the Force Provider Module [self-contained modular living quarters with heat/air conditioning, lights, and running water] made for pretty good living conditions by soldier standards. Of course, actually emplacing the module is where all the work is. At Bagram, living conditions were pretty austere. We occupied existing structures and a few GP Medium tents."¹⁸ For the troops at Bagram, "living conditions were harsh at the beginning, but once supplies started to come in, we made that place our home," commented Master Sergeant Patricio Cardona.¹⁹ Specialist Fourth Class Felix L. Morales remembered that with time, things improved. "Living conditions were bad, but with a good attitude, little by little quarters improved. Food improved as well as the showers. In the beginning, it was a two-mile walk to take a shower."²⁰ The initial shortages of material things gradually improved over time. However, more logisticians were not forthcoming. The priority for personnel was combat troops.

From the beginning of the deployment, LTF 530



LTF 530 established a Supply Support Activity at the airfield in Mazar-e-Sharif. The LTF conducted logistics operations in three distinct locations in support of TF Dagger.



Troop billeting and support operations in Bagram could only be established after the area was cleared of mines and unexploded ordnance.

functioned with tightly constrained numbers of personnel. “The word ‘troop cap’ was in everybody’s vocabulary at the time,” noted Captain Mathew Hamilton. “Part of the agreement between the [United States] and Uzbekistan involved limiting the number of U.S. personnel on the base [at K2]. And, historically in ‘troop cap’ operations, logistics units were subjected to economy of force decisions to provide for higher numbers of maneuver forces.”²¹ From the initial deployment to K2 through the establishment of the FSBs at Bagram and Mazar-e-Sharif, it was the classic “cart before the horse” scenario; logistics troops were trailing the “gunfighters” in the flow of forces into theater. Despite the lack of a robust logistics force, LTF 530 provided extensive base operations support, supplied the full range of logistics services, and supported major tactical operations like Operation ANACONDA from multiple sites in two countries. As summed up by Captain John Rios, “I think LTF 530 was successful and made a name as a result of Task Force Dagger being able to do their mission with no worries about support. When a maneuver unit has to worry about support, then that supporting unit has failed. We did not fail.”²² ♣

The author would like to thank the members of LTF 530 who contributed to this article.

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Endnotes

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- 16 Rios interview, 28 April 2007.
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A Team Effort:

The Montagnard Uprising of September 1964

by Robert W. Jones Jr.

THE Montagnard Uprising of 1964, was a complex event with the potential to alter the course of the Vietnam War. The one constant during this political and military maelstrom was the efforts of Special Forces soldiers, noncommissioned officers and officers, that defused the situation. The eight-day Montagnard uprising was just a “blink of an eye” in the fifteen years of American involvement in Vietnam, but had a lasting impact. This event will be explained from the perspective of a single Special Forces team.

American Special Forces (SF) teams built a close relationship with the Montagnards in the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) program in the Central Highlands of Vietnam. Suddenly, on Sunday, 20 September 1964, the American soldiers were jolted into a new reality

when the friendly “Yards” revolted against the Vietnamese government. The U.S. Special Forces soldiers watched in horror as their trusted allies killed or imprisoned their Vietnamese Special Forces “commanders” and other Vietnamese present in four CIDG camps. In some camps, the Montagnards imprisoned the American SF

“Yard” is an abbreviation of Montagnard. It is a term of endearment used by the Special Forces soldiers who worked with the Montagnards in Vietnam. The CIDG units were called “Strike Forces.” The Montagnard soldiers were referred to as “strikers” by the SF advisors.

teams. However, in one camp, Buon Brieng, the teamwork, quick response, and resourceful actions of one A-Team prevented a takeover; the Americans remained in control, and ultimately defused the uprising.

This article features Special Forces Team A-312, 1st Special Forces Group (1st SFG), based in Okinawa, Japan. Sent to train, advise, and lead Montagnard irregular soldiers against the Viet Cong in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam, A-312’s experience typified that of many other SF teams in Vietnam in 1964. Although this article

centers on Team A-312, it also encapsulates the early role of SF in the CIDG program in Vietnam.¹

In the Central Highlands, the Special Forces and CIDG fought two groups, the Viet Cong (VC) and the Viet Montagnard Cong (VMC). The VC were ethnic Vietnamese who traced their lineage to the Viet Minh, the communist movement that fought the Japanese and then the French for Indochinese independence. The VMC were ethnic Montagnards who worked with VC units in the region. While the Viet Cong had pressed many Montagnards into service, others were trained as a political cadre by the communists to organize the Montagnards to fight against the Vietnamese government. Their targets in the Central Highlands were the American-supported CIDG camps.²

Five CIDG camps surrounded Ban Me Thuot. They were organized as light infantry battalions. Depending on recruitment, the Strike Force battalions varied in strength. Buon Brieng had the largest force, with five companies. The other four camps had between three and four companies. Each Strike Force company was organized as a light infantry company with a small headquarters and four platoons of thirty Montagnards armed with surplus World War II weapons.³ American Special Forces teams advised the CIDG units in conjunc-

The scope and level of American involvement in Vietnam would change from 1960 to 1965, moving from an advisory role to the deployment of major conventional forces after 1965. Prior to 1965, Special Forces A Teams established camps and trained primarily Montagnard tribesmen (as well as Nung, Cambodian, and Vietnamese) as part of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group program. The CIDG units formed a counter-guerilla force to fight the Viet Cong. From 1961 to 1964, teams from the 1st and 7th SFGs (from Okinawa and Fort Bragg respectively) rotated in six-month temporary duty (TDY) tours in Vietnam.

tion with their Vietnamese SF counterparts.

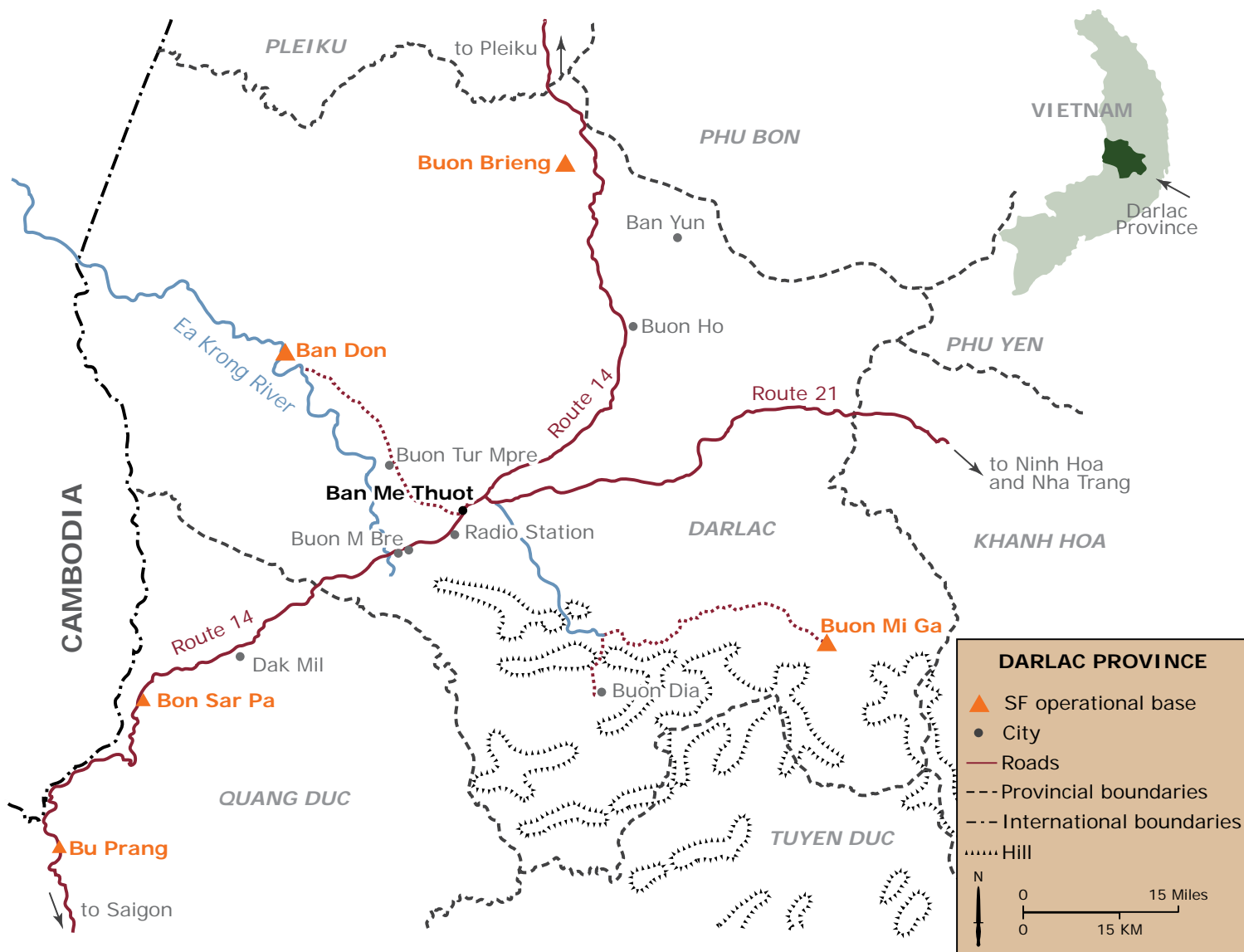
Officially, *Lực Lượng Đặc Biệt* (LLDB, the Vietnamese Special Forces) teams were in charge of the CIDG at each camp. American SF were only there to advise the Montagnards, but in reality, they commanded and led the CIDG companies. The LLDB were content with this arrangement and rarely left camp. Every camp had an assigned area of responsibility. The belief was that as more camps were established and patrols expanded, the Viet Cong would be driven out of the area.⁴ The Montagnards were the key element of the CIDG program, but they also hated the Vietnamese because they had “invaded” their territory.

In many of the CIDG camps throughout Vietnam, a strained relationship existed between the Montagnards and the Vietnamese Special Forces (LLDB). When Captain Gary A. Webb and Team A-311B arrived at Bu Prang on 27 August 1964, they discovered a major problem. The LLDB were “in cahoots with the merchants in the ‘ville’ [village] to cheat the troops,” and “instead of paying the troops, [the Montagnards] were given credit in the ‘ville’ for food, clothes, wine, or whatever at a particular shop . . . and the bill was sent to the LLDB Finance

Officer or NCO. The individual’s account was debited by the amount he owed in the ‘ville,’” recalled Gary Webb.⁵ The scam enabled the LLDB and the ARVN (Army of South Vietnam) Camp commander to pocket part of the CIDG payroll. The American SF invariably found themselves in the middle between the Vietnamese and the Montagnards.

The Montagnard uprising of September 1964 did not occur in a vacuum. The spring and summer of 1964 was filled with “political conspiracies; attempted military coups; and Buddhist, Catholic, student, and labor demonstrations and protests.”⁶ At the end of the summer, General Nguyen Khanh seized power, by coup, in Saigon.⁷ The uprising cannot be written off as a mutiny against South Vietnamese authority and the traditional oppression of the Montagnards. It was a combination of both during a turbulent period. The center of the Montagnard population was in the II Corps area of operations around the city of Ban Me Thuot, the traditional Montagnard capital.

The Montagnard organization, “*Fronte Unifié Pour La Libération des Races Opprimées*” (United Front for the Liberation of the Oppressed Races—FULRO) planned



the uprising against the South Vietnamese government. It would take place in the Ban Me Thuot area of the Central Highlands in Darlac province. When Ban Me Thuot became predominately Vietnamese in population, the Montagnards migrated deeper into the highland regions. The mountains surrounding the city were filled with villages of traditional Montagnard longhouses. According to the FULRO uprising plan, the Montagnard strikers would seize the central five CIDG camps in the II Corps Tactical Zone (Buon Mi Ga, Bon Sar Pa, Bu Prang, Ban Don, and Buon Brieng). This would start the eight-day open rebellion against the South Vietnamese government.⁸

The second phase of the FULRO plan called for the strikers from all five camps to seize and secure control of Ban Me Thuot. The Montagnards would leave a nominal security force at each camp, while the majority of the units established blocking positions on the roads to Ban Me Thuot or moved into position to seize the city. Once the city was secured, the FULRO leadership planned to negotiate with the Vietnamese government to regain the political autonomy enjoyed under the French. Although it was a loose coalition/confederation, every camp was critical to the success of the uprising.⁹

During the night and early morning of 19–20 September 1964, the Montagnard CIDG troops in all five camps executed—without warning—the well planned phase I of the uprising. At four camps (Buon Mi Ga, Bon Sar Pa, Bu Prang, and Ban Don), the Montagnards disarmed

and restricted their U.S. Special Forces advisers to their billets. In the fifth, Buon Brieng, the Strike Force did not harm the Vietnamese nor disarm the Americans.¹⁰ Because of the events at Buon Brieng and the proactive measures taken by the Special Forces there, the overall uprising failed.

In September, Team A-312 was over halfway through its six-month TDY tour in Vietnam that had begun in June 1964. “Typical” of many Special Forces A Teams in Vietnam, A-312 recruited, trained, led into combat, and suffered casualties with their Montagnard irregulars. Aggressive patrolling led to the team’s first casualty. On 23 July 1964, Specialist Fourth Class George Underwood, the junior medic, was killed in a VC battalion-sized ambush while leading a resupply convoy back from Ban Me Thuot. Specialist Fifth Class Ricardo Davis was his replacement from Okinawa. “In the Rhade tribe, men’s names began with a ‘Y.’ Since Davis arrived with a buzz cut or ‘burr’ haircut, someone nicknamed him ‘Y-Burr,’” said Sergeant Lowell Stevens. It stuck for several years.¹¹ When Sergeant First Class Billy Akers was transferred to B-52 Delta, a classified reconnaissance project, Sergeant First Class Billy Ingram became the medical sergeant.¹² The team continued to execute their mission while incorporating the new members.

A-312 built a strong rapport with the CIDG and the Vietnamese Special Forces. The newly appointed Montagnard battalion commander, Y Jhon Nie, was a product of two worlds; his father was French and his mother Montagnard. His mother had raised him as a Montagnard before being sent to a Catholic boarding school. There he learned French and English. After completing school, he returned to the Montagnards because he was still discriminated against by the lowland Vietnamese. He joined the CIDG and rose rapidly through the ranks as a combat leader. When A-312 arrived at Buon Brieng, in June 1964, he was Sergeant Earl Bleacher’s 3rd Company commander. Y Jhon soon rose to be the battalion commander.¹³

After three months, the SF of A-312 had bonded closely with their Yards. Buon Brieng was exceptional. The relationship between the Vietnamese and Montagnards was good. That was the case until “leading up to the uprising there was something going on, but we couldn’t put our finger on it. The Montagnards were edgy,” said SGT Bleacher. “Several [of the Montagnards] had asked us the question, ‘If the Vietnamese fought the Montagnards who would you side with?’”¹⁴ Team commander, Captain Vernon Gillespie, radioed his concerns to the SF B Team in Pleiku and to SF Headquarters in Nha Trang. The issue was significant enough that he followed the radio messages with coordination visits to Nha Trang and Saigon. However, the Americans had no solid intelligence, “it was just a shadow,” Gillespie remembered.¹⁵ That shadow soon emerged from the darkness on 19 September 1964.

On 18 September 1964, A-312 received a surprise guest. Howard Sochurek, a World War II combat pho-

Left to right: front, Sergeant First Class Billy Ingram and Sergeant Ron Wingo; back row, Sergeant Burhl Cunningham, Sergeant Lowell Stevens, and Specialist Fifth Class Ricardo Davis.





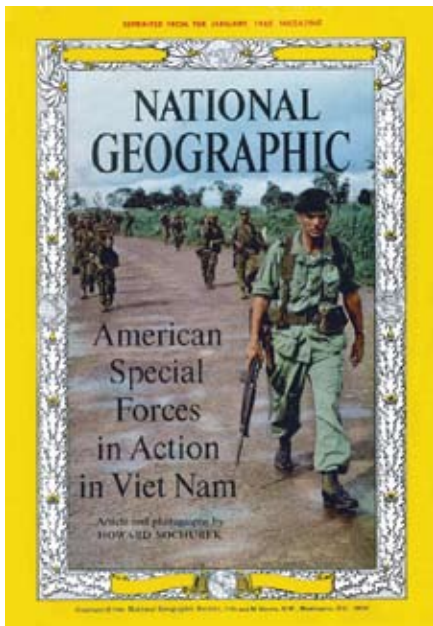
First Lieutenant John T. Horn and Sergeant Earl Bleacher. Both would play an important part in stopping the uprising.

tographer and career journalist, came to research the Montagnard tribes and write an article for *National Geographic* magazine. Sochurek proved to be lucky. He was the only American journalist in the area when the uprising started. The first thing the Vietnamese government and Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) did was to restrict all movement into the area, thus keeping the press out. His exclusive story was featured in the January 1965 issue of *National Geographic*.¹⁶ Sochurek was there when it erupted.

CPT Gillespie was well respected by the 1st SFG soldiers. He was an experienced leader who demanded excellence from his team. At the same time, he expected the NCOs to do their jobs and fully supported them. His standards were clearly articulated to the Americans and Montagnards. The Yards (who were considered

simple hill people by the Vietnamese) were keen observers of leadership. The Americans, led by Gillespie, set the example; the Montagnards emulated the Special Forces.

The first official notice of a potential problem that CPT Gillespie received was a radio message on Saturday afternoon (1310 hours), 19 September 1964. The B Team in Pleiku alerted teams throughout the area that there could be Montagnard demonstrations on either the 19th or 20th. The reason for the demonstrations was to show support for an autonomous Montag-



National Geographic cover showing Major Edwin Brooks leading the rebels away from the radio station. The photo was taken by Howard Sochurek.

Howard Sochurek (1924–1995)

by Charles H. Briscoe

BORN in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1924, Howard Sochurek attended Princeton University before serving in the Pacific during World War II. As the 3234th Signal Photo Detachment commander, Second Lieutenant Sochurek covered the 77th Infantry Division from Guam through its invasions of Leyte and Cebu in the Philippines and Okinawa. After a stint as an Eighth U.S. Army (EUSA) photo officer, he was the photo assignment officer for General Douglas MacArthur in Tokyo.¹

Discharged as a First Lieutenant in June 1946, Sochurek joined the *Milwaukee Journal*, working as a staff photographer until hired by *LIFE* magazine in September 1950. The combat veteran was quickly dispatched to Korea where he joined the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team to parachute behind enemy lines at Sukch'on on 20 October 1950. His photos of the airborne assault and subsequent capture of P'yongyang, the North Korean capital, were featured in several issues of *LIFE*.²

From Korea, Sochurek journeyed to Malaya, Burma, India, and then French Indo-China to cover that colonial war. There, the intrepid photo journalist parachuted into the beleaguered French fortress at Dien Bien Phu. As the only American photographer on the scene to record the final surrender to the Viet Minh and subsequent Communist takeover of North Vietnam, *LIFE* had exclusive coverage. Sochurek's coverage of the Indo-China war merited the Overseas Press Club "Robert Capa Award" for "superlative photography requiring exceptional courage and enterprise" in 1955.³

After working in several *LIFE* domestic and overseas bureaus that included Paris and Moscow, Sochurek became the first photographer to serve as a Nieman Fellow in Journalism at Harvard, 1959–1960. Production of a documentary film, "X-Pilot," on American rocket plane test pilots was followed by *LIFE* coverage of United Nations operations in the Congo in 1961, and the build-up of U.S. support in South Vietnam.⁴ The return to Southeast Asia marked the beginning of a second long tour in the region for Sochurek. While documenting America's training effort in the Republic of Vietnam, Sochurek captured early Special Forces work with the Montagnards in the CIDG (Civilian Irregular Defense Group) for *National Geographic*.⁵

This anecdote reflected Howard Sochurek's philosophy about a photo journalist. One evening while on bivouac in Vietnam, an American officer asked him, "Why do you come out here? You don't have to do it." Before he could respond, another officer spoke up, "I don't know the answer, but maybe I can guess. If there are people

out here—both Americans and Vietnamese—fighting and dying, there should be somebody to tell about it.” Sochurek agreed that it was the best answer that he could give.⁶

Howard Sochurek’s photographic revelations in *LIFE* covered Russian geography and life, Mongolia between the major Communist powers, New York City slum schools, harsh realities of a Norwegian fishing village, the war in Vietnam, and the multiple Asian religions.⁷ His fascination with the indigenous people of Southeast Asia continued well into the 1980s with *National Geographic* assignments.

Since he was a pioneer in television news, the photo journalist realized that the growing popularity of this communications media would spell the demise of weekly photo news magazines like *LIFE* and *LOOK*. During an investigation into the future of imaging, printing, and electronic press production for Henry Luce and *TIME/LIFE* in 1965, Sochurek was introduced to computer graphics. He was ready to adjust his forté to capitalize on the wonders of the Electronic Age.

Working on his own in New York City in 1970, Sochurek began exploring his “electronic palette” to produce color pictures more vivid than real life color. Electronic photography could assist doctors save lives by helping them to diagnose major diseases early in their onset. He worked side-by-side with engineers and doctors to enter into the human body with sound, magnetic, and heat waves as well as X-rays to make picture records of conditions rather than resort to exploratory surgery. After his article, “Medicine’s New Vision,” appeared in the *National Geographic*, January 1987, twenty-one children’s lives were saved. When you think MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), think Howard Sochurek.

Photography is a chameleon of art and science. It can save lives and win battles. It is limited only by the imagination of the person behind the camera, and Sochurek placed no limits on his.⁸

- 1 “Sochurek to Korea,” *TIME/LIFE Inc.* news release, undated, courtesy of Tania Sochurek, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 2 Howard Sochurek, “Camera Records a Combat Jump,” *LIFE*, Issue No. 19, 6 November 1950, 36–38; Howard Sochurek, “In the Wake of War,” *LIFE*, Issue No. 19, 6 November 1950, 39.
- 3 William Littlefield, *LIFE* Promotion, “Howard Sochurek Bio,” 6 June 1962, courtesy of Tania Sochurek, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 4 Littlefield, “Howard Sochurek Bio.”
- 5 Howard Sochurek, “American Special Forces in Action in Viet Nam,” *National Geographic*, January 1965, and Howard Sochurek, “Viet Nam’s Montagnards Caught in the Jaws of War,” *National Geographic*, April 1968, respectively. Thanks to Tania Sochurek, this *Veritas* article contains many of the unpublished photos taken by Howard for these *National Geographic* articles.
- 6 Littlefield, “Howard Sochurek Bio.”
- 7 “Sochurek on Life,” *TIME*, Inc., 1966, courtesy of Tania Sochurek, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 8 John Durniak, “Life Cycles: Photo Pioneer: Howard Sochurek—The Hidden Universe,” *PhotoPro* (May/June 1994), reprint courtesy of Tania Sochurek, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.



nard state. They were expected to be peaceful.¹⁷ As soon as he received the warning, Gillespie spoke with Y Jhon, his Montagnard Strike Force battalion commander. Y Jhon assured Gillespie that there would not be a problem at Buon Brieng.¹⁸

Throughout his military career, Gillespie had been taught to think ahead and plan contingencies for the “what ifs” that might happen during operations. The entire team embraced this philosophy, whether planning for a weapons range or a combat patrol.¹⁹ Throughout the uprising period, the Americans in Buon Brieng were thinking and acting faster than the Montagnards as well as American decision-makers in Nha Trang and Saigon. The A-312 SF soldiers not only had the “ground truth,” but they also dealt with the Montagnards on a day-to-day basis. Based on the experience and the recommendations of his NCOs, CPT Gillespie knew that if the team controlled the ammunition, denied the Montagnards the use of the vehicles, and protected the Vietnamese Special Forces, it could maintain control of the camp. Gillespie thought out these priorities mentally on Saturday night before he went to bed.²⁰ As a precaution, he ordered the two on-going patrols back into camp.

The team members on one CIDG patrol were surprised by the recall message. Sergeant Ron Wingo remembered, “I was on a company-sized operation with First Lieutenant [John T.] Horn and received a message [from Gillespie] to return to camp immediately. I did not understand this, but did not question or ask why. We walked most of the night and arrived at camp in the early morning [20 September].”²¹ The Americans on the other patrol had a different experience, never getting the message to return.

Sergeants Lowell Stevens and Burhl Cunningham were leading the second patrol. Stevens noticed the Montagnards had been talking on the radio more than normal. The men also seemed uneasy. Suddenly, the patrol stopped moving. After a short, yet intense, communal discussion, the Montagnard strikers turned around and started back to camp. They ignored the protests of the

Americans. Stevens and Cunningham tried to explain the predicament to Buon Brieng. Their radio calls went unanswered.²² The Americans were forced to either follow the Montagnards or stay alone in enemy territory.

On the way back to camp, the two Americans “heard a large amount of gunfire, grenades, and mortars in the distance off to the west. ‘It sounded like either a fire-fight or a firepower demonstration by the Viet Cong,’ said Stevens. ‘I was certain they were staging to attack the camp.’”²³ After a rapid foot march, the patrol reached Buon Brieng in the afternoon. “When we arrived at the camp, we didn’t know what to expect,” said Stevens. “Nothing was really out of place, but then I noticed the flag was not the South Vietnamese one. It was something else.” It turned out to be the FULRO confederation flag, a symbol of the Montagnard uprising.²⁴

Sunday was usually a relaxed day in the camp. The first patrol had just returned and Gillespie was getting a haircut when he received an urgent message from the B Team alerting him to problems at the other CIDG camps. “At 0830 hours [20 September], I called Captain Truong, the *Lực Lượng Đặc Biệt* (LLDB), Vietnamese Special Forces commander, and Y Jhon [Y Jhon Nie], the CIDG battalion commander, into the team house. I informed them that for the time being and until further notice, I was taking command of all forces at Buon Brieng. A Montagnard revolt had started. [I told] Y Jhon, ‘Do not move against the Vietnamese here. They are under my protection. To kill them, you’ll have to kill me first,’” said Gillespie.²⁵ The Montagnards knew that Gillespie was a man of his word and that the other Americans would follow him unquestioningly.

Afterward, CPT Gillespie assembled A-312 in the team house. “He informed us that under no circumstances would we be disarmed and [that we] would fight if any attempt [were] made to take our weapons. The Vietnamese SF would not be harmed and we would protect them at any cost,” said SGT Wingo.²⁶ “We gathered all the ammo we could carry and went to our respective duty stations.” The acting team sergeant, Sergeant First Class Gene Bell, gathered the Vietnamese LLDB and brought them inside the SF team house. The potential for VC sympathizers in the Strike Force was another concern.

Gillespie told Y Jhon, the battalion commander, “There were some of the Strike Force I was suspicious of. So I told Y Jhon to bring his family to a building in the U.S. perimeter with six trusted strikers to protect the family.”²⁷ Once his family was safe, Y Jhon announced that there would be a ritual sacrifice at 10 A.M. Both Gillespie and CPT Truong would participate as his guests of honor. In times of crisis, the Montagnards referred back to their traditional ways.

To get rid of “bad spirits,” a sacrifice had to be made by the Montagnards. Animal sacrifice was a significant part of their religion and culture. Animals from chickens to water buffalo were killed, depending on how serious the problem was deemed. Part of the ritual included drinking Montagnard rice wine, *Nhom Pae*.



Sergeants Burhl Cunningham (left) and Lowell Stevens (right) on patrol with one of the CIDG companies.

"Montagnard women would chew the rice for a while and spit the mixture of rice and saliva into large ceramic jugs," said Stevens. "The saliva was a fermenting agent for the wine."²⁸ The number of jars of *Nhom Pae* measured the importance of the ceremony; seven jars were the highest level. The entire Montagnard camp participated. The ceremony for Y Jhon, CPT Truong, and CPT Gillespie merited seven jars of *Nhom Pae* and the sacrifice of a water buffalo, plus other animals (a pig and several chickens). It was extremely significant in the eyes of the Montagnards.²⁹ Howard Sochurek, the photo journalist who had come to the camp to document Montagnard culture, was permitted a rare opportunity to view a ceremony.

Sochurek was taking photos when Y Jhon, Gillespie, and Truong stepped out, dressed in traditional Montagnard clothing for the two-hour ceremony. As Gillespie, Y Jhon, and Truong drank *Nhom Pae* through long reeds, a Montagnard shaman chanted and daubed their bare feet with the blood of the sacrificed buffalo to drive the evil spirits away. At the same time, "Montagnard women danced in the background to the tune of brass gongs."³⁰ When the ceremony ended, the shaman placed identical copper bracelets on the wrists of Y Jhon, Gillespie, and Truong to symbolize the bond of brotherhood and friendship. The three soldiers from different cultures were now joined together as allies. The "bad spirits" mollified, the Montagnard camp went back on a modified work schedule.³¹ After the ceremony, a sense of calm permeated the camp.

In the meantime, with the word of the uprising still in its early stages in other camps, the NCOs of A-312 moved into action. "Captain Gillespie told me to disable all vehicles in the motor pool," recalled Wingo. "We had five or six 2½-ton trucks and three ¾-ton vehicles and a couple of jeeps."³² "I knew that we might need them again, so I simply removed the carburetor jets."³³ One ¾-ton with a .30 caliber machinegun was left in operation just in case the team needed to escape.³⁴ His work on the vehicles done, Wingo went back to the radio room. "There was a frenzy of activity in the radio room. Y Jhon Nie was talk-

ing at great length with the other camp leaders on the TR-20 radio. It got very heated at times. I couldn't understand what was being said, but it was very intense," remembered Wingo.³⁵

The other FULRO Montagnard leaders wanted the Buon Brieng force to join the attack on Ban Me Thuot and block Route 14, to stop the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) reaction forces from Pleiku. Y Jhon refused to join the Montagnard uprising. "Y Jhon spoke fairly good English and was briefing Captain Gillespie on the situation and what [was happening in] the other camps. It appeared to me that the bulk of the troops [in Buon Brieng] seemed somewhat confused," said Wingo.³⁶ The camp's link to the outside world was the communications center (or "commo bunker"). The two communications sergeants, Wingo and Bell, were helped by SGT Bleacher because Bell, the senior radio-man, was the acting team sergeant. "The radio traffic was heavy. The B and C Detachments wanted regular sitreps [situation reports]," remembered Wingo.³⁷

From the radio, the A-312 soldiers learned that everything was not going as well at other camps. They heard from the Bu Prang sitrep that the Montagnards had killed the LLDB and other Vietnamese in camp.³⁸ "It got a little scary when you realize that twelve of you are in the middle of a battalion of anxious and nervous CIDG, who were armed to the teeth. One mistake or unintentional act could have had some serious consequences," recalled SGT Wingo.³⁹ "I feel that Captain Gillespie's positive leadership and the team's good rapport and trust with the troops had an effect in calming the situation."⁴⁰ By then the second patrol had returned to Buon Brieng.

After from his patrol, SGT Stevens went to the team house. "I had a good meal and drank a *Ba Moui Ba 33*



The Shaman puts a copper bracelet on Captain Vernon Gillespie's wrist to signify brotherhood.



Captain Truong receives his copper bracelet. The two-hour Montagnard ritual was designed to drive out the bad spirits.

Captain Vernon Gillespie, Y Jhon, and Captain Truong walk through the camp together to the sacrifice ceremony.



beer. As I sat there, I began to get angry at the VC sitting out there waiting to attack," said Stevens. As he had done almost every night in camp, Stevens decided to fire the mortar, but with a twist. "The VC were out of range, or so they thought. The 81mm mortar has a maximum charge 9 (which is a range of 4737 meters). I estimated where the VC were and added an extra charge (charge 10) to the mortar and set it at 800 mils (45 degrees) to put it past the maximum range." Then, Stevens went to the mortar pit to prepare about thirty WP [white phosphorous] and HE [high explosive] rounds, with the "extra charge." The Montagnards, probably used to seeing Stevens in the mortar pit, seemed oblivious of him. "I began to drop the rounds as fast as I could. When I was finished with the fire mission, I looked up and surrounding the mortar pit were ten or fifteen of the Yards with M-3 submachineguns pointed at me. One said 'Finis sir, no more mortars.' I swear the .45 caliber bore of those grease guns looked larger than an eight-inch howitzer," remembered Stevens.⁴¹ Discretion being the better part of valor, he returned to the team house and did not go into the mortar pit for four days. "Later, the Montagnards told me that I did hit the VC assembly area and caused some casualties. I was convinced the VC were massing for an attack while the Yards were preoccupied with the uprising."⁴²

On 21 September (Day 2), the CIDG at Buon Brieng made no attempt to start the vehicles and the camp remained quiet. Still, the strikers remained alert with weapons ready. Y Jhon was getting pressure from the FULRO leadership to move south to Ban Me Thuot. Y Jhon responded by holding a battalion formation. He explained the situation to the assembled troops. "He received a hundred percent vote of confidence from the Strike Force. Following this, Captain Truong and I talked to the Strike Force and explained our respective positions. We received the same vote of confidence," said Gillespie.⁴³

The strikers prepared to defend the camp against a Vietnamese Army attack. "The Montagnards were prepared to stand their ground and moved all of the ammunition out of the ammo bunker—mortar and small arms—and positioned it around the perimeter," said SGT Wingo.⁴⁴ Ambushes/observation posts were set up on the camp road from Route 14. "Things were very uneasy that night. We expected to see South Vietnamese Army tanks in the morning. As I remember, no one slept that night," said Wingo.⁴⁵ It was anticipated that the ARVN would attack the camps to put down the uprising.

This was confirmed the next morning (Day 3) when the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) buzzed the camp. The first plane dropped leaflets instructing the Americans to take cover in the bunkers. Soon after the leaflet drop, a flight of VNAF planes with loaded bomb racks "buzzed" Buon Brieng a few times. The U.S. response was to wave their t-shirts while standing on the team house roof. They hoped that the pilots would see the American Special Forces and not bomb or strafe the camp. "We were

sure that the Vietnamese would be merciless against the Montagnards. They would not hesitate to bomb the women and children in camp," said Stevens.⁴⁶ The CIDG did not fire at them and the aircraft did not attack. Further to the south, the various factions were feverishly seeking a peaceful solution.

Caught in the middle, World War II and Korean War veteran, Major Frederick C. Patton, became one of the negotiators. Patton had arrived in Vietnam with SF Detachments B-110 and A-111 from 1st Special Forces Group in Okinawa to develop a Vietnamese-led reconnaissance unit. The mission was cancelled because of LLDB infighting. Patton became the Special Forces coordinator at Ban Me Thuot responsible for the five SF teams in the surrounding area. Patton had traveled to all camps and met all of the Montagnard, LLDB, and ARVN commanders. During his command visits in July 1964, Patton had encountered a Montagnard commander being rebuffed by the U.S. 8th Field Hospital staff. He was merely trying to visit his wounded soldiers.⁴⁷

Major Patton was in Nha Trang when he happened upon the upset CIDG battalion commander from Bon Sar Pa. Y Mot had come to Nha Trang to visit his soldiers who had been wounded in a major ambush.⁴⁸ When the two entered the hospital ward where the wounded Montagnards were convalescing, Patton was impressed. Wounded strikers, some with amputations, got out of their beds when Y Mot entered. It was an obvious sign of high respect. Y Mot was concerned that the Americans would not properly care for his soldiers. They would not have been given appropriate treatment in an ARVN hospital.⁴⁹ After the emotional visit, Patton arranged for a UH-1 "Huey" to fly Y Mot back to Bon Sar Pa in style. This personal compassion and soldierly respect would pay dividends during the uprising.⁵⁰

Throughout the region, other U.S. commanders were seeking peaceful solutions. Major Edwin E. Brooks, the Special Forces B Team commander in Pleiku, flew to Ban Me Thuot and asked CPT Gillespie for help. A helicopter was sent to bring him to Ban Me Thuot. Y Jhon and Howard Sochurek were invited to accompany him. "I

In Buon Brieng, Y Jhon addresses his troops before he and Captain Vernon Gillespie go south to Ban Me Thuot.





Negotiations taking place at Buon M'Bre. Left to right: Y Jhon (in green "cowboy" hat smiling), center Major Fredrick Patton (in Green Beret), Y Mot (in tan "cowboy" hat), and Captain Richard Haskell (in Green Beret with arms crossed).

knew we had the situation under control in Buon Brieng. I knew my NCOs and the XO [executive officer] could control the situation in camp," said Gillespie.⁵¹

MAJ Brooks, MAJ Patton, Captain Richard Haskell (the B-Team surgeon), and Sergeant First Class Ernie Tabata (the A-311B engineer from Bu Prang) met the trio from Buon Brieng at the airfield. Their first stop was the Ban Me Thuot radio station. Rebel strikers from Bon Sar Pa had seized it to broadcast the FULRO message to the surrounding area. The Americans watched as Patton and Brooks boldly marched into the compound and ordered the Montagnard strikers to leave and follow them. Initially, the Montagnards hesitated but then followed the order. They formed up and started a road march toward Ban Me Thuot behind the U.S. soldiers. Howard Sochurek called it the "Pied Piper move."⁵²

The five Americans and Y Jhon accompanied the rebel platoon. The striker platoon bypassed Ban Me Thuot, turning southwest on Route 14. They stopped at the FULRO command post in the village of Buon M'Bre (five miles southwest of Ban Me Thuot). One of the key FULRO leaders at that time was Y Mot, the Bon Sar Pa battalion commander. Based on their previous meeting and his mutual respect for Y Mot, Patton was able to open negotiations with the leadership.⁵³

The environment that MAJ Patton and CPT Gillespie entered was tense and hostile. There was an openly anti-American element led by a Cham (a Cambodian Montagnard) [identified in Howard Sochurek's photographs as wearing a checkered scarf]. Gillespie confirmed that the faction led by the Cham, a Montagnard named Y Wat, and the Bon Sar Pa interpreter, Y Clur, were the "hot-heads." Another group controlled by Y Mot was reasonable.⁵⁴ A heated discussion began. The Montagnards insisted that the uprising was only against the Vietnamese, not with the United States nor the Special Forces. It was obvious that they did not appreciate the American intervention.

In the middle of the discussions, a 2½-ton truck came

into the village filled with captured Vietnamese soldiers. "I felt it was necessary to show in some small way that these men were under the protection of the U.S. to keep them from being killed," said Gillespie.⁵⁵ As the Montagnards watched in disbelief, Gillespie, Y Jhon, and Patton cut the bonds on the Vietnamese prisoners. "This act seemed to have an effect as no further move was made against the Vietnamese," wrote Gillespie.⁵⁶ The Vietnamese were still prisoners, but at least they weren't tied up. The Americans established themselves by changing the rules. Since the Montagnard leadership was split, MAJ Patton, CPT Gillespie, and Y Jhon elected to stay in the village overnight. This did not please the "hot head" faction. After a small meal, the Americans and Y Jhon went to sleep to get a fresh start in the morning.⁵⁷

Though they resumed negotiations early the next day, Patton and Gillespie "faced a stone wall of resistance to moving back to Bon Sar Pa."⁵⁸ At 0730, Patton and Gillespie announced that if they did not move back to Bon Sar Pa by 0830, the two American SF officers would leave "and with us would go any hope of future Special Forces support."⁵⁹ This spurred a lot of discussion among the Montagnard leaders, but no movement. For the Americans, the negotiations had ended. As Patton and Gillespie prepared to leave, the negotiations took a new direction.

An outsider to the CIDG, Colonel John T. "Fritz" Freund, the deputy senior advisor to the ARVN II Corps, showed up in Buon M'Bre. He stepped into the middle of negotiations trying to help. But his lack of experience with the Montagnards' situation quickly became evident to the SF soldiers. Freund spoke fluent, cultured Parisian French and assumed that because the senior leaders in the Vietnamese army spoke that language, all others did as well.⁶⁰ Freund immediately demanded in French to speak to the leader. The rebels provided a proxy because they didn't know the American colonel. An old-



The rebel Montagnard platoon that seized the Ban Me Thuot radio station on their road march to Buon M'Bre. The white armbands on the right arm identify them as FULRO.

er Montagnard was produced.⁶¹ Freund demanded food and sat down to eat with the elderly Montagnard who understood a little French. Freund talked with the older gentleman for almost an hour, and then triumphantly announced to the Americans that an agreement had been reached. The Montagnard leaders were glad that Freund was leaving for Ban Me Thuot to radio MACV headquarters. The elder Montagnard was relieved. He only spoke a few words of French and spent the most time saying “*Oui, mon Colonel,*” and nodding passively in agreement to whatever the American had been saying.⁶²

Though an agreement had not been reached, there were obvious divisions in the Montagnard confederation. Instead of the five planned CIDG battalions and a general popular uprising by the people, the FULRO leadership had gotten less than half of the forces and the popular uprising had not happened. Just as Freund was leaving, as if by plan, two VNAF aircraft buzzed the village at low level. “The expression on the faces of the troops was that of doom and the leaders showed great concern,” wrote Gillespie.⁶³ Seizing the opportunity, Patton and Gillespie yelled, “Back to Bon Sar Pa! Back to Bon Sar Pa!”⁶⁴ Surprisingly the Montagnard troops responded. They loaded their trucks and began a tactical road movement to Bon Sar Pa. With the strikers going home, the SF officers devised a plan.

Major Patton took one of the FULRO leaders to Ban Me Thuot to open negotiations with the Vietnamese. SFC Tabata, CPT Gillespie, Y Jhon, and Sochurek climbed in a jeep to lead the Montagnard convoy south. COL Freund changed his mind and joined the procession to Bon Sar Pa. “After a short period on the road, a jeep full of ‘hot-headed’ [FULRO] leaders whipped around Colonel Freund. . . . They went around [me] at high speed and I gave chase. After following for about ten kilometers and not being able to catch up, I came upon a jeep accident,” wrote Gillespie.⁶⁵ The jeep accident was another



Colonel John T. Freund (in the center holding a submachine gun) in discussions with Americans and Montagnards at Bon Sar Pa.

group from Bon Sar Pa that had lost control on a curve. The photojournalist snapped photos while Gillespie and Tabata rendered first aid, put the injured on makeshift stretchers, and loaded them into the jeep for the trip to Bon Sar Pa.⁶⁶ When Freund and the rest of the convoy reached the scene, he thought it was the result of an ambush. After searching for CPT Gillespie and SFC Tabata for an hour, the strikers told Freund that they had received a radio message that the two Americans were already in Bon Sar Pa.⁶⁷

Bon Sar Pa became the site for the next round of negotiations. MAJ Brooks and CPT Haskell flew in by helicopter from Ban Me Thuot with Colonel John T. Spears, the Special Forces Vietnam commander. With all of the senior leadership involved in the negotiations with the Montagnards, “I asked Major Brooks to return Y Jhon and me to Buon Brieng as we were [of] no further use at Bon Sar Pa and had work in our camp,” said Gillespie.⁶⁸



Captain Vernon Gillespie and the B Team surgeon, Captain Richard Haskell, during the road march to Buon M'Bre.



Captain Vernon Gillespie and Sergeant First Class Ernie Tabata at the jeep accident scene. The Montagnard standing to the rear with the red and white checkered scarf was called the “Cham.”

Captain Gillespie and Y Jhon boarded the helicopter to return to Buon Brieng. Upon arriving, Y Jhon immediately called a battalion formation to explain the situation to his men. "Another vote of confidence was received," said Gillespie.⁶⁹ The Team had kept a lid on problems in the commander's absence. Soon after the formation, Gillespie received a message from the B Team for all of the Vietnamese to evacuate the camp by helicopter. CPT Truong prepared his team for evacuation, but announced he would remain with Gillespie. Only a direct order from General Co, the ARVN II Corps commander, changed Truong's mind. The LLDB departed by helicopter that afternoon.⁷⁰

Later, Y Jhon held a meeting with all the Strike Force leaders and the Americans. He restated his views and asked the advice of the leadership, who adopted a "wait and see" attitude. "It became quite clear that the U.S. was in control of the camp only because the Strike Force wanted us in control," said Gillespie.⁷¹ However, they also made it clear to Gillespie that if the ARVN attacked Ban Me Thuot, they would have to join the uprising.⁷²

The next morning (Day 4, 23 September), Gillespie and Y Jhon flew out of camp. This time the pair were flown first to Ban Me Thuot to brief U.S. officials. While Y Jhon remained in the city, CPT Gillespie was joined by Captain Charles Darnell (from Bon Sar Pa) and flown to Saigon to brief the MACV staff. "We were taken straight to General Westmoreland's office and briefed both General [William] Westmoreland and General [Joseph] Stilwell," said Gillespie.⁷³ They were sent to the U.S. Embassy to do the same for Ambassador Maxwell D. Taylor and his deputy U. Alexis Johnson. Instead of returning to Buon Brieng, Gillespie stayed overnight in Saigon to brief the MACV J2 and J3 staffs.⁷⁴

In his time at the headquarters, Gillespie learned that MACV had directed U.S. Special Forces, Vietnam to prepare a plan to rescue the Americans and Vietnamese from the camps in revolt. Operation SNATCH was to be conducted by volunteer soldiers from the Nha Trang staff with supporting helicopters.⁷⁵ Instead of returning to Buon Brieng, Gillespie was dropped off at Ban Me Thuot on the afternoon of 24 September.

Back in Buon Brieng, A-312 monitored the situation. Although the Americans still controlled the gate, the SF soldiers developed an escape and evasion plan if conflict broke out between the Montagnards and the ARVN.⁷⁶ "The ammunition and communications bunkers had been prepared with explosives. We had electrical and manual fuses in place to blow it sky high if we needed to," said SGT Bleacher.⁷⁷ That contingency was never needed, as the revolt had begun to unravel.

The eight-day Montagnard uprising ground to a halt. Colonels Freund and Spears acted as intermediaries during the negotiations between the FULRO leaders and the Vietnamese Army at Bon Sar Pa. Other negotiations were held in Pleiku. In the midst of the drawn out negotiations, the FULRO communist-led "hot head" faction disappeared one night.⁷⁸ In the aftermath of the uprising,



U.S. helicopter assets were prepared for Operation SNATCH.

the fallout for the Montagnards and the Americans was quite different.

When the uprising was over, it was as if nothing had occurred. "On 27 September, everything went back to normal [in the camps], it was as if nothing had ever happened. The Yards were ready and eager to go back on patrol," said SGT Stevens.⁷⁹ Most Montagnards were anti-communist and eager to fight the VC. "We started normal operations to keep the CIDG busy," said SGT Wingo. "Sergeant First Class Bell planned two company-sized operations for seven days each; one north and one west of camp [beginning on 29 September]. Sergeant [Vincent] Skeebea [intelligence sergeant] planned a twenty-one day intelligence gathering operation in the area to the south," said Gillespie.⁸⁰ For the Americans, the backlash by U.S. SF Command, Vietnam was severe.

Four of the team commanders were relieved by COL Spears and sent back to Okinawa and Fort Bragg. When it appeared that CPT Gillespie would be relieved, General Westmoreland intervened to keep him in command. Gillespie returned to Okinawa with the rest of his team in December 1964.⁸¹ The ARVN reaction was more subtle.

During the next year, four of the five CIDG camps were closed. New camps were built near the old sites. The highly trained strikers were simply too valuable to eliminate, but the Montagnard battalions were broken up and scattered by company to the newly established camps. Then the battalions were reorganized to include multiple Montagnard tribes to inhibit indigenous cohesion.

Y Jhon Nie, the Buon Brieng CIDG Battalion commander, "Was an able, sharp and articulate individual, and had made some serious enemies when he defied the order [for his unit] to move on Ban Me Thuot," said Wingo. A local shaman put a spell or hex on Y Jhon. "He absolutely came apart mentally and believed that he had been cursed. He mentally degraded into what I can best describe as a babbling idiot," said Wingo.⁸² Gillespie had him treated by doctors and psychiatrists at the 8th Field Hospital. They used drugs and other medical protocols in a month-long treatment.⁸³ Afterward, CPT Gillespie

At Camp Bon Sar Pa the three company CIDG strike force of Rhade and M'Nong tribesmen (just over 400 soldiers) quickly seized control. The Montagnards killed eleven Vietnamese Special Forces troops at the camp. Captain Charles B. Darnell Jr. and his team (A-311A) were disarmed and held hostage in the team house. The strikers seized the nearby district headquarters at Dak Mil (four miles north on Route 14).¹ Using the trucks from the camp, a platoon seized the radio station at Ban Me Thuot, thirty-five miles the north-east. Two companies of CIDG staged in Buon M'Bre for an attack on Ban Me Thuot.

At Bu Prang (southwest of Bon Sar Pa), the three companies of strikers seized the camp early in the morning. Fifteen Vietnamese LLDB were killed. Later, seventeen Popular Forces (the equivalent of a Vietnamese Army security unit) soldiers were killed at a nearby checkpoint. In the morning, the Strike Force tried to move to Ban Me Thuot, but it was faced with a dilemma. All of the camp's 2½-ton trucks were, by chance, in Ban Me Thuot picking up supplies. The rebels could wait for transport or walk.³ One Strike Force company walked the twenty-five miles to Bon Sar Pa, while the remainder stayed in camp. (This turned out to be critical since the plan called for the three Bu Prang companies to travel by truck up Route 14 through Bon Sar Pa to help secure Ban Me Thuot.)

The CIDG force at Ban Don, advised by Captain Richard Terry's A-752 (a 7th SFG team), consisted of Rhade and Jarai Montagnards. Terry and Captain Nguyen Van Huong, the LLDB commander, were in Nha Trang when the uprising began. The Strike Force disarmed and tied up the LLDB. The Americans were disarmed and put under guard. Taking the camp's trucks, they headed southeast towards Ban Me Thuot, but stopped ten miles short of the city.⁴ CPT Terry met the force and convinced them to return to camp.



The mission of the five-company Strike Force Battalion at Buon Brieng was critical: block Route 14, the main north-south road, and stop any Army of Vietnam (ARVN) reaction forces coming in from Pleiku. The remainder of the force would go by truck down Route 14 to join the attack on Ban Me Thuot. With five companies in the CIDG battalion, Buon Brieng had a crucial role. It was the relationship between the Montagnards and their SF advisers that ultimately determined the outcome of the uprising.



The Mnong Montagnards at Camp Buon Mi Ga (located southeast of Ban Me Thuot) were organized into four companies (about 614 soldiers) and advised by Captain Donald L. Loa's detachment A-121A. The Montagnards killed the ten LLDBs and disarmed CPT Loa's team before leaving the Americans under guard as they took the trucks to drive to Ban Me Thuot. American helicopters arrived and CPT Loa and his team were allowed to leave the camp.²

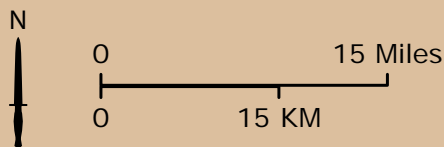
- 1 Colonel Francis J. Kelly, *U.S. Army Special Forces, 1961-1971* (Washington DC: Center for Military History, 1989), 63-64; "Historical Resume of the Montagnard Uprising, September 1964," Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), APO San Francisco, 96240, copy, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Shelby L. Stanton, *Green Berets at War: US Army Special Forces in Southeast Asia 1956-1975* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1985), 80; Gary Webb, note to Steve Sherman, *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957-1975)*, CD-ROM (Houston, TX: RADIX Press, 2000); Captain Charles B. Darnell Jr., "After Action Report, Montagnard Rebellion in Camp Bon Sar Pa, 20 September-3 October 1964," Detachment A-311, U.S. Army Special Forces, Vietnam, copy, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 2 "Historical Resume of the Montagnard Uprising, September 1964," Stanton, *Green Berets at War*, 80.
- 3 After Action Report, Montagnard Rebellion in Camp Bon Sar Par, 20 September-3 October 1964; Ernie Tabata, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones Jr., 4 March 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, interview notes, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 4 Kelly, *U.S. Army Special Forces, 1961-1971*, 64; Historical Resume of the Montagnard Uprising, September 1964; Stanton, *Green Berets at War*, 80; John E. Fischer (XO A752), note to Steve Sherman, *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957-1975)*, CD-ROM (Houston, TX: RADIX Press, 2000).



FULRO flag

UPRISING AREA

- ▲ SF operational base
- ✈ Airfields
- ▲ Actual rebel routes
- ▲ Proposed rebel routes
- 🔥 Major rebel incidents
- City
- Roads
- Provincial boundaries
- .- International boundaries





Sergeant Lowell Stevens (left), holding a captured Viet Cong flag, and Captain Vernon Gillespie (with cigarette in his mouth) on patrol with some of the Montagnard CIDG.

brought Y Jhon back to Buon Brieng. A week later, he suffered a relapse (the Montagnards believed a more powerful hex had been put on him). The former battalion commander eventually became a guard at the Ban Me Thuot B Team compound.⁸⁴ Though Y Jhon's situation could be explained, analysis of the Montagnard uprising proved difficult.

It was unclear if the Montagnard uprising of 1964 was an armed political demonstration, a mutiny against the ARVN and South Vietnamese government, or a Communist attempt to promulgate reprisals that would cause the Montagnards to align with the Viet Cong. Some Montagnards regarded the uprising as a political demonstration, like earlier ones done in Saigon. The uprising was planned to last eight days. It did that. The uprising did force the Vietnamese government to grant some political concessions to the Montagnards, such as property ownership and political representation.⁸⁵

One thing is certain, A-312, led by Captain Vernon Gillespie, made it known that the Montagnard Upris-

ing at Buon Brieng was "nipped in the bud" by a team effort. They would not have succeeded without the complete professionalism of everyone on the team. Gillespie refused to endorse the "official" report because of what he felt were discrepancies. In his own after action report Gillespie emphasized, "the total effort at Buon Brieng never has been a one-man show, but was a team effort. . . . I assure you it would read quite different[ly] if I had not had the complete support of every member of this detachment."⁸⁶ When A-312 found itself in the center of the September 1964 Montagnard uprising, it was the only team not disarmed by rebelling Montagnards. The decisive actions of CPT Gillespie and his team effectively stopped the uprising in its tracks.

Author's Note: This article is not meant to "gloss over" the accomplishments of the other A Teams and SF soldiers during the uprising. While the focus of the article is about A-312, two other events contributed to defusing the Montagnard uprising. The missing trucks at Bu Prang stopped the rapid movement of that force to Ban Me Thuot. The efforts of A-752, led by Captain Richard Terry caused the Ban Don Strike Force to return to camp. ♣

The author wishes to thank Lowell Stevens, Earl Bleacher, Ronald Wingo, Vernon Gillespie, and Steve Sherman for their help with this article. The Howard Sochurek photos are courtesy of Tania Sochurek, all others are from Lowell Stevens.

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Endnotes

- 1 Most readers are more familiar with the current term for a Special Forces team, namely an operational detachment alpha (ODA). During most of the 1960s, however, the basic elements of Special Forces were usually referred to as "A Teams."
- 2 Earl Bleacher, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones Jr., 18 November 2005, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Lowell W. Stevens Sr., interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones Jr., 27 October 2005, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 3 Vernon W. Gillespie Jr. and Shirley Gillespie, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones Jr., 23 February 2006, Locust Grove, VA, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Bleacher interview, 18 November 2005; Stevens interview, 27 October 2005; *The CIDG forces were armed primarily with M1 and M2 carbines, M3 submachine guns ("Grease Guns"), Browning Automatic Rifles (BARs), and M1919A6 .30 caliber light machine guns. The Buon Brieng CIDG Battalion had four rifle companies, plus a headquarters company of about 100.*
- 4 Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006; Bleacher interview, 18 November 2005; Stevens interview, 27 October 2005.
- 5 Gary Webb, note to Steve Sherman, U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG



A-312 in a relaxed moment en route back to Okinawa. Left to right: Sergeant Burhl Cunningham, Sergeant Lowell Stevens (back to camera), Specialist Fifth Class Ricardo "Y Burr" Davis, Sergeant Earl Bleacher, and Captain Vernon Gillespie.

- Program Vietnam (1957–1975)*, CD-ROM (Houston, TX: RADIX Press, 2000), *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957–1975)*.
- 6 Graham A. Cosmas, *The United States Army in Vietnam: MACV The Joint Command in the Years of Escalation, 1962–1967* (Washington DC: U.S. Army Center for Military History, 2006), 144.
- 7 William C. Westmoreland, *A Soldier Reports* (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1976), 97.
- 8 Colonel Francis J. Kelly, *U.S. Army Special Forces, 1961–1971* (Washington DC: Center for Military History, 1989), 63–64.
- 9 Kelly, *U.S. Army Special Forces*, 63–64.
- 10 Kelly, *U.S. Army Special Forces*, 63–64.
- 11 Lowell W. Stevens Sr., interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones Jr., 3 November 2005, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; **The “Y” in a Rhade name is pronounced as an “ee” (“ee-Burr” or “ee-Jhon”).**
- 12 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005.
- 13 Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 14 Bleacher interview, 18 November 2005.
- 15 Captain Vernon Gillespie, “After Action Report, CIDG Revolt at Camp Buon Brieng, 30 September 1964,” Detachment A-312, U.S. Army Special Forces, Vietnam, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC (hereafter cited as “Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964”); Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 16 Ronald Wingo, e-mail to Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones Jr., 27 November 2005, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Howard Sochurek, “American Special Forces in Action in Viet Nam,” *National Geographic*, January 1965, 38–65.
- 17 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 18 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 19 Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 20 Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 21 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 22 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005.
- 23 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005.
- 24 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005.
- 25 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006; Sochurek, “American Special Forces in Action in Viet Nam,” 47–48.
- 26 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 27 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 28 Stevens interview, 27 October 2005.
- 29 Sochurek, “American Special Forces in Action in Viet Nam,” 48, 51–52; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 30 Stevens interview, 27 October 2005.
- 31 Sochurek, “American Special Forces in Action in Viet Nam,” 48, 51–52.
- 32 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 33 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 34 Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 35 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 36 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 37 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 38 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 39 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 40 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 41 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005.
- 42 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005.
- 43 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 44 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005; Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 45 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005; Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 46 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005; Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 47 Frederick C. Patton, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones Jr., 8 June 2007, Fayetteville, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Frederick C. Patton, Special Forces Coordinator, Ban Me Thuot, note to Steve Sherman, *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957–1975)*, CD-ROM (Houston, TX: RADIX Press, 2000), hereafter “Patton note in *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957–1975)*.”
- 48 Patton interview, 8 June 2007.
- 49 Patton interview, 8 June 2007.
- 50 Patton interview, 8 June 2007.
- 51 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 52 Sochurek, “American Special Forces in Action in Viet Nam,” 56; Patton interview, 8 June 2007; Patton note in *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957–1975)*.”
- 53 Patton interview, 8 June 2007; Patton note in *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957–1975)*.
- 54 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Patton interview, 8 June 2007; Patton note in *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957–1975)*.
- 55 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964.
- 56 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006; Patton interview, 8 June 2007.
- 57 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 58 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 59 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 60 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006; Patton interview, 8 June 2007; Patton note in *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957–1975)*.
- 61 Patton interview, 8 June 2007; Patton note in *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957–1975)*.
- 62 Patton interview, 8 June 2007; Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006; Patton note in *U.S. Army Special Forces in the CIDG Program Vietnam (1957–1975)*.
- 63 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006; Charles M. Simpson III, *Inside the Green Berets, The First Thirty Years* (Navato, CA: Presidio Press, 1983), 172.
- 64 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964.
- 65 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964.
- 66 Ernest K. Tabata, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Jones Jr., 4 March 2007, Fort Bragg, NC, interview notes, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 67 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964.
- 68 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964.
- 69 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 70 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
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- 75 “Historical Resume of the Montagnard Uprising, September 1964,” Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), APO San Francisco, 96240, copy, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Patton interview, 8 June 2007.
- 76 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 77 Bleacher interview, 18 November 2005.
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- 79 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005.
- 80 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 81 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964; Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 82 Wingo e-mail, 27 November 2005.
- 83 Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 84 Gillespie interview, 23 February 2006.
- 85 Stevens interview, 3 November 2005.
- 86 Buon Brieng AAR, 30 September 1964.

Books

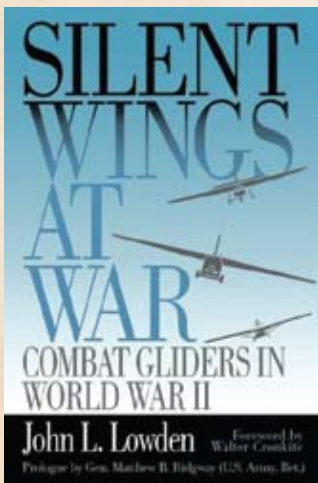
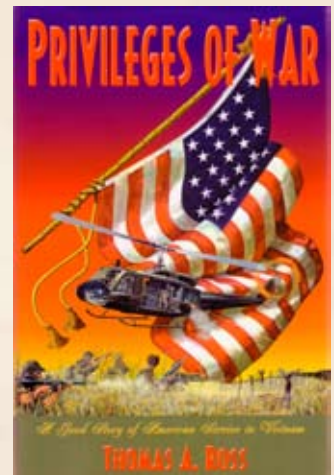
in the

Field

"Books in the Field" provides short descriptions of books related to subjects covered in the current issue of *Veritas*. Readers can use these recommendations as a starting point for individual study on topics related to Army Special Operations history.

Thomas A. Ross, *Privileges of War: A Good Story of American Service in Vietnam* (Atlanta, GA: American Heritage Publishing, 2004)

Retired Special Forces Major Thomas A. Ross' account of his service with Detachment A-502, 5th Special Forces Group begins with his arrival in Vietnam at the height of the Tet Offensive in January 1968. The book is divided into two parts, the first dealing with the day-to-day activities of Det A-502 based in Nha Trang. The second is an account of a relatively little-known operation of Det A-502 that resulted in the liberation of a Montagnard village controlled by the Viet Cong for more than eight years. A personal memoir, the book contains photographs, a list of abbreviations, and a personnel roster of A-502.



John L. Lowden, *Silent Wings at War: Combat Gliders in World War II* (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institute Press, 2002)

John L. Lowden uses first-person accounts to tell the story of the Allied glider operations in World War II. Trained as a glider pilot, Lowden examines the origins of the glider force and the seven major airborne assaults that used gliders. Forty individuals contributed their stories to the book. Contains photographs, maps, three appendices, and an index.

E. Bruce Reynolds, *Thailand's Secret War: OSS, SOE, and the Free Thai Underground During World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

With this work, Reynolds provides the most comprehensive scholarly work on the Free Thai movement to date. He details how, mainly because of high-level politics, the American Free Thai effort was much more successful than the British effort. There was never a large-scale uprising of the Free Thai against the Japanese. However, the OSS was conducting guerrilla training and clandestine radio stations were relaying intelligence back to the Allies. Had the war lasted longer, the OSS was positioned to undermine the Japanese occupation of Thailand. Reynolds conducted exhaustive archival research—an excellent bibliography and notes section is included—and exploited many new sources. He has produced a landmark work that is geared towards serious students of both intelligence operations and the Second World War in the Far East. Includes photos, footnotes, bibliography, and index.

